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THE MONTH

JULY 1949

SIMONE WEIL
Gabriel Marcel

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1949

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VOL. II. No. I

NEW SERIES

JULY 1949

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NOTES ON NEW CONTRIBUTORS

C. S. LEWIS is contributing a volume on the Sixteenth Century for the *Oxford History of English Literature*, and is at work on his autobiography.

GABRIEL MARCEL, the distinguished French philosopher, is this year's Gifford lecturer at the University of Aberdeen.

BERNARD J. NOLAN is English Master at the Grammar School, Barrow-in-Furness.

C. E. M. JOAD is busy with his farm and with four new books, including *A Critique of Logical Positivism*.

W. SCHENK is lecturer in History at University College, Exeter, and the author of *The Concern for Social Justice in the Puritan Revolution*.

R. W. MOORE is Headmaster of Harrow, and is also known for his writings on religion, education, and Greek and Roman antiquities.

THE AUGUST NUMBER OF *THE MONTH* CONTAINS

COMPASSION

A Short Story

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BEHIND THE TIGHT PUPILS

By
GRAHAM GREENE

BEHIND the tight pupils
That have never yet opened on the world of chairs and
walls
The blinding sight, the fountain of light, the all-but-hopeless
desire.

Then he who has scaled the to us unscalable mountains
Uncurls his feet on the dry, the trivial hills;
On the first step of the stair he falls
And sees in the grate behind the guard the dim and nursery fire.

And the houses to him are only houses,
and the people he meets are blind and dumb,
and the colours have no colour, and the heart never rouses
at the homes that are not home.

In the long months of fruit and frost, when the blossoms form
and fall,
between one January and another December,
while the heart dulls and the fruit go rotten,
he has forgotten all.
It is only the saints who remember.

And love comes like a memory
Of a face that is not this face, and a hand
That is not this hand,
Though it was not lies he told her
When he cried, "I love, I love,"
When the touch of a shoulder

For a moment stirred a thought
Of once in the dark the light . . . and he does not understand
When under his lips the place of love
And below his fingers the breast
Offer a kind of peace and a kind of rest,
Like an exile who chooses a city
For the shape of a roof and a tree
And a patch of sky above.

EPITAPH

By

C. S. LEWIS

HERE lies the whole world after one
Peculiar mode; a buried sun,
Stars and immensities of sky
And cities here discarded lie.
The prince who owned them, having gone,
Left them as things not needed on
His journey, yet with hope that he,
Purged by aeonian poverty
In Lenten lands, hereafter can
Resume the robes he wore as man.

SIMONE WEIL

By

GABRIEL MARCEL

*The following pages may seem enigmatic to one who has not read Mlle Weil's book, *Pesanteur et la Grâce* (Plon, pp. xxxiii, 207, 195 francs) and M. G. Thibon's very illuminative introduction. She was a Jewess of brilliant intelligence and insatiable curiosity—she had read a mass of heterogeneous philosophy, Indian, Greek, modern; the Old Testament was hers by heredity, she daily studied the New. She had not had time, perhaps, to assimilate all this and had not even begun to put order into it. It was perhaps her profound humility which differentiates her from the self-contempt of an Aldous Huxley, and she would have dissociated herself with exasperation from his systematic "perennial philosophy"; she was affine to, yet sundered from, a Blake, a St. John of the Cross, Sartre, Bloy. In short, she had not yet arrived at a personal or human-divine integration; she was still the victim of the conflict between what drags the soul downwards and grace which rescues it. She was intensely conscious of St. Paul's warning that we must not "conform ourselves" to this world; and was dangerously appreciative of the negative elements in the Areopagite or St. Catherine of Siena ("Thou art she who is not") because unable so far to lay hold of its positive content. She erred, one cannot but think, in taking up the heavy work of factory or field-labour, imagining that thus she would share in the life of the "humblest" of her fellow-men. She never could do that, so long as she thought quite differently, felt quite differently, about everything that was going on around her and in them. Also her extreme and deliberate and continual under-nourishment in no way made for clarity of mind. We have at any rate the example of a woman so terribly impressed by the misery and corruption of our age, so directly aware of the "down-drag" within herself towards the catastrophe she saw round her, that she was ready for experiments so heroic that most of us, who possess the Faith, do not so much as dare to contemplate them. M. Thibon warns us against two extremes—one is, to detect every possible "heterodoxy" in a book like this, in order to*

condemn it; the other is, to twist the writer's thought till it bears an orthodox meaning which in fact it does not. Let charity and peace, justice and truth, continue to kiss each other, and we shall have some chance of appreciating a woman whose fragmentary writings are agitating a million up-rooted souls.—Editor.

IF there is one distinctive fact which characterizes our epoch in the field of philosophy, this assuredly is it—Less and less is a philosopher inclined to allow his thought to unfurl itself within some close-sealed area, cut off from all communication not only with his personal life as a whole, but indeed with that of all his contemporaries. From this point of view the career of Simone Weil has a special significance and a representative value.

When she had finished her course of philosophy, totally disregarding what well may have been the "bourgeois prejudices" of her family circle, she resolved to enter a factory as a simple working woman, so as to have first-hand experience of what "labour" may mean in that industrialized world which is our own. Thus she obtained work at a milling-machine in the Renault works, hired a room in a working-men's quarter, and lived exclusively off her slender earnings. An attack of pleurisy forced her to interrupt this experiment after no more than a few months. But not long afterwards she went to Spain to take part in the civil war on the Red side. Yet she would never actually bear arms herself, and here we may ask whether we cannot detect a certain lack of logic in her behaviour. For after all she was an enthusiast, and fanned the flames of military zeal in the hearts of her companions which could not but issue into the very acts that she refused to perform on her own account. We know, however, that one day she was on the point of being shot for protesting energetically against an execution which she considered unjustifiable.

During the German occupation she went off to the southern zone and obtained work as a field-labourer. Thus it was that she came across Gustave Thibon; and despite differences of origin and temperament which you would have thought would render any close association between them impossible, they became in fact the closest of friends. When Simone Weil went to America, she left a large part of her papers to Thibon, explicitly authorizing him to make any use of them that he might think good, should

she not return. Here are a few lines from the remarkable letter which she wrote to him shortly before leaving:

You tell me that you have found, in my papers, not only what you yourself had already thought, but things that you had not yet thought but were waiting for. Well, then—they belong to you; and I hope that when you have recast them in your mind they will appear, some day, in what you write. I want no better fate for the ideas that visit me than some satisfactory domicile, and I should be very happy if your pen provides them with a roof—but let them be sufficiently transformed to reflect your own self-hood! This would lighten a little my sense of responsibility and the crushing thought that, owing to my various shortcomings, I cannot serve the truth as I myself see it, though through its exceeding great mercy truth does condescend (so I feel) to give me a glimpse of itself. . . . Luckily, what is within me is either valueless, or else dwells away from me in a perfect form, inviolate in an inviolable world, though always ready to come down to earth again. That being so, nothing that concerns me myself can have the slightest importance. I also like to think that after the little shock caused by our separation, whatever may be its effect upon me, *you* will never feel the least regret about it: if you sometimes happen to think of me, do so as you might about a book that you read when a boy. That is the only way I want those I love to feel for me: I know I shall then be causing them no pain.

Does not this letter reveal in a thrilling way the wonderful spiritual delicacy of one who could be reproached for nothing save that she sometimes was lacking in charity towards her own self? Possibly I shall have to repeat, below, that Simone Weil, in her inmost heart, remained alien to that rightful love of self which, because of its relation to *being* as such, has always been recognized as right by Catholic wisdom.

Simone Weil was not to stay long in America—everything in that country was bound to jar on her—and the last part of her life was spent in England. She wished to be of use to “free” France, but, displaying thus again her absolutely uncompromising character, she refused to profit by rations that were in any way superior to those to which the very poorest in France were reduced—those who had nothing but their “tickets” with which to purchase food. It is not surprising that in such conditions she developed lung-trouble, to which she succumbed towards the end of 1944. 43

Gustave Thibon performed his task with the utmost zeal.

He published the principal manuscripts that had been entrusted to him, under the title *Pesanteur et la Grâce*. This, together with a long introduction, appeared in 1947, and there is more to follow. The book created no great stir when it first appeared, but it has made its way to all parts of the world, and M. Thibon told me recently that he was now receiving letters from everywhere, dealing with his work. A writer such as François Mauriac does not disguise his admiration for the book; a high destiny is undoubtedly in store for it. It is certainly the most "non-conformist" book ever written! Simone Weil was a Jewess and integrally so; but she is very far from sparing her co-religionists. "Israel," she wrote, "it is utterly horrible and made foul—one would say, deliberately—ever since Abraham, inclusively (well, save for a few prophets). As though to proclaim as clearly as possible—'Give heed! *That* is where evil is! Nation elect to be blinded! elect to be the executioner of Christ!' And, a little further on, "The Jews, that little handful of uprooted men, have been responsible for the uprooting of the whole round world. Their role, so far as Christianity is concerned, has been to root up Christendom from the whole of its own past. . . . The tendency of the Enlightenment, 1789, secularism, etc. . . . has increased immeasurably this uprooting by means of the myth of 'progress.' And an uprooted Europe has uprooted the rest of the world by its colonial conquests. Capitalism, totalitarianism are part and parcel of this uprooting movement. And anti-semitism inevitably propagates the influence of the Jews."

There are grounds for thinking that Simone Weil, when she left Europe, was not without sympathy for Communism: but she was going to have her eyes opened as to what Communism in fact became, and would express herself about that, too, without the least hesitation. In Plato's footsteps (see *Rep.* bk. vi), she proceeded to denounce the Great Beast as "the only real idol; the only *ersatz* of God, the only imitation of That which is both my self and infinitely distant from my self." Moreover she inherited from her master, the moralist writer Alain, an invincible distrust of power, whatever it might be, and no matter who possessed it. "Always regard men in power as dangerous *things*: retire within yourself so far as you can without despising yourself. And if, one day, you see that you must either play the coward or go and crash yourself up against their power, you must regard

yourself as conquered by the nature of things and not by men. One can be imprisoned or enchained; but one can also be stricken with blindness or paralysis—it makes no difference.” Possibly we would not misinterpret Simone Weil if we said that in her eyes power is a principle of interior mental collapse: that it ultimately tends to drive him who possesses it into madness, and thus runs the risk of making him lose precisely what makes him human. The only way to preserve your dignity when you are the victim of violence, is to consider the man in power as a *thing*. But the discredit which she considers inseparable from the being the man in power, weighs also on the *social fact* as such. “Only one thing, *here below*, can be accepted as an end, for it is indeed in some sense transcendent so far as the human person goes: the collectivity.” But what follows shows as clearly as possible that the ‘transcendence’ spoken of here is a false and evil one, just as, for Hegel, there exists an evil Infinite. “The ‘collectivity’ is the object of every idolatry; that is what chains us to the earth. . . . ‘Society’ is invincibly the dominion of the Prince of this world. The only duty that is ours, so far as ‘society’ goes, is to limit its evil effects. (Richelieu said: ‘The well-being of the State is a this-worldly affair.’)”

This might tempt us to think that Simone Weil was strictly an individualist. Would that be just? No; for evidently in her perspective this word could bear no exact meaning, and this becomes clear when we see how she treats the “I.” “We possess nothing in this world—for chance can strip us of everything else—save the power of saying ‘I.’ And that is what we must give to God—that is what we must destroy. Quite definitely, no other free act is allowed us save the destruction of one’s ‘I.’” These are sentences so tragic as to appal us; words written in blood. “Nothing in the world can take from us the power of saying ‘I.’ Nothing save the uttermost disaster, and nothing is worse than that uttermost disaster that destroys the ‘I’ by some outside force—for then one can no more destroy it for oneself.” When this destruction is in fact produced by some exterior force, it produces within us a violent indignation. “But if one denies to oneself this indignation for the love of God, then the destruction of one’s ‘I’ is not caused from without but from within.” I think that we can fairly say that there is noticeable here a *transposition* of the great Christian principle that there is an

affinity between Grace and the Cross—provided that I fully recognize the freedom of my act in taking up my cross and carrying it. Simone Weil would certainly refuse to admit—and would be right in doing so—that suffering even when extreme has value which is spiritual as such. Everything depends on the spirit in which the suffering is endured. “In hours of disaster,” she admirably well writes, “our vital instinct survives the severing of our attachments and twines itself blindly round anything that can serve it as support, as a plant grips hold with its tendrils. . . . From this point of view disaster is always hideous, as life stripped naked always is, as a stump is, as the swarming of insects is. Life without form. There, survival is the only attachment left—having no other object than itself—a Hell!”

It would seem to be no exaggeration to say that such phrases reveal a mental attitude which is hard enough to define, but which really amounts to a genuine hatred for existence as such. And then the problem consists in how Simone Weil can harmonize such an attitude with her belief in God—I hardly dare say in God the Creator, for I gravely doubt whether in her case those words can receive the meaning which Christianity assigns to them. But one can say that the whole of her mentality is under the domination of two opposing forces—grace, and the “down-drag” (*pesanteur*). “Every natural movement of the soul is controlled by laws analogous to those of material weight. Grace alone is an exception.” But what exactly must one understand by this “weight” or down-drag? There is, in actual fact, a “human mechanic.” Thus “anyone who suffers tries to communicate his suffering to another—either by ill-treating him, or by provoking him to pity—in order to lessen his own pain, and he does in fact so lessen it. But as for the man who has sunk to the deepest depths—who has no one to be sorry for him and who has not the power to hurt anyone—if he has no children and no one who loves him—ah! his suffering remains shut up within him and poisons him.” Nor will Simone Weil deny—admirable sincerity!—that this tendency to extend one’s torment out beyond oneself, is to be discovered still in the bottom of her own heart. “Living beings, and things, are not sacred enough to me: may I not filthy anything, when I shall have been wholly transformed into mire!” And she adds what seems to probe deep: “If one is so feeble that one can arouse no pity nor do any harm to anyone,

well, one does do harm to the inward picture of the universe in oneself." We might at first be tempted to discern some sonorous echo of Spinoza in this kind of dialectic of suffering and abasement; but perhaps the analogy would be rather superficial. In Spinoza, the tendency of Being to persevere as Being presents itself as something indisputably and metaphysically true, but Simone Weil would certainly be strongly tempted to refuse such a quality in Being. Between her and Spinoza there was Schopenhauer, though perhaps he did not directly influence the author of "Grace and the Down-drag": it seems fairly clear, in fact, that she would have detected in him a sort of intellectual dilettantism. It is perfectly patent that the sense of man's wretchedness and that of the whole world takes precedence, in her, over any perception of creation in its beauty and glory, though she was far from insensitive to that beauty if not to that glory. But one has the impression that she did not recognize in herself any right to appreciate it in full freedom so long as so many of her fellow-men remained fettered and in tears. It seems to me perfectly impossible to form a true estimate of her mind unless one recognizes in it as something quite fundamental this "bias"—the sense of fraternity which in no way interfered with that clear sight of hers that at times one might almost feel implacable.

Grace is what sets itself in opposition to this dead mechanical force that Simone Weil calls *pesanteur* or the "down-drag." "Extinction of Desire (as in Buddhism); detachment; *amor fati*—or the desire for the Absolute Good—it always comes to the same thing: the emptying out of desire; the finite-ism of all 'contents'; desire without an object; desire without wishing. Detaching our desire from all 'goods' and then waiting. Experience proves that the void of this 'waiting' is filled: and then one is in contact with the Absolute Good." And elsewhere: "Renunciation: to imitate God's own renunciation in creating: there is a sense in which God renounces being All. We must renounce being 'something.' That is our only 'good' . . ." "We possess only what we renounce; what we do not renounce, escapes us. In this sense one cannot possess anything save by way of God."

But had Simone Weil a truly clear idea of God? In spite of everything, we may doubt it. One cannot help feeling that she wavers between a notion which is still fairly close to Spinoza's and a definitely Christian one. In illustration of the former point

I quote, for instance, the following: "At every moment, our existence is the love of God for us. But God can love only Himself; so His love of us is love for Himself through the *medium* of ourselves. So He who gives us being loves in us our consent to not-be." I confess to finding it difficult, from a Christian standpoint, to admit these two phrases. . . . God can love only Himself: His love for us is love for Himself through the medium of ourselves. At the heart of the Christian mystery, do we not meet with something that—in our poor human language—we can interpret only as the Will to proceed forth from Self, to create some non-Self in order to love it? To say that God can love only Himself is to go counter to the meaning of creation understood according to its deepest values; in fact to transform it into a bad joke. Other statements may be found elsewhere, as I have indicated, which seem much nearer to Christianity grasped in its essential bearing. One cannot but acknowledge, however, a certain lack of prudence in Simone Weil, a certain lack of moderation in her expression of the highest truths. Without going so far as to say that she was formally heretical, I should be inclined to say that she was constantly on the fringe of heresy; and that, in certain quite essential matters she uses expressions that a believer can but reject with a sort of horror. I will quote two examples. Here, to begin with, is a passage where it is rather the wording itself which jars on us and shocks us; the roots of her thought may be regarded as outside of criticism. "Inflexible necessity, destitution, distress, the crushing weight of poverty and of exhausting labour, cruelty, torture, violent death, brute force submitted to, terror, sicknesses—all is the divine love; it is God withdrawing Himself from us so that we may love Him. For were we exposed to the direct rays of His love, without the overshadowing of space, time and matter, we would evaporate like water under the sun; there would not be enough 'I' in us to sacrifice that 'I' through love. Necessity is the screen placed between God and ourselves to enable us to subsist. It is for us to pierce that screen so as to cease to *be*." I say that it is not prudent to express oneself like that; for such a way of speaking can but arouse a hatred for God in anyone who has not yet attained to the apex of mysticism. If the love of God is cruelty, torture, violent death, etc., may we be preserved from any such form of loving! One might suppose that we had been

reading a thing written in jest. But I think a real metaphysical error lurked in the very form of words. It may be true to say that horror lays the soul bare and renders it, consequently, capable of grasping a reality which never would have got through to it if denudation had been spared it. But this certainly does not allow us to say that horror *is* the divine love. Much more delicate distinctions are here demanded which only a subtle theology could exhibit; these alone would avoid the unpleasant shock that the passage I have quoted would inflict upon a sensitive mind. But what seems to me much graver still is Simone's way of speaking about immortality. Here again there is the intrusion of a totally Spinozist way of thinking and of condemning the imagination. "We must set aside all beliefs that seek to fill the void, which sweeten what is bitter; belief in immortality; belief in the utility of sins—*etiam peccata*; belief in the providential ordering of events—in short, the *consolations* that men usually seek in religion." Elsewhere she says that "belief in immortality is harmful because it is not within our power to represent the soul to our mind as truly incorporeal. Such a belief is, then, really a belief in life simply *going on*, and it prevents our making any use of death." How fail to find grounds for anxiety in such formulas? How not detect in them a certain being in love with death which is radically incompatible with Christianity undefiled and true? "To love truth," she writes, "means to endure the void and consequently to accept death. *Truth is on the side of death.*" The italics are my own; and it is in those last words that I feel we find, seeping up in spite of all, the element in Simone Weil's spirituality which most demands that we should be on our guard. "There are those for whom everything, here below, which brings them nearer God, is helpful: for me, it is all that takes us further away from Him." This avowal is moving and beyond words revealing. It enables us to understand how Simone Weil could write in her paradoxical way that "the complete absence of mercy upon earth is itself a witness to divine mercy." But such a statement, however much it rends and pierces the heart, does not "ring Catholic"—and of course I am here taking the word "catholic" in its etymological sense of "universal." It is impossible not to turn back, for our necessary succour, to Claudel (I do not think Simone Weil liked him) and beg him to let us listen to the all-inclusive music of his mighty organ which alone

can genuinely integrate the pathetic, agonizing voice of this partially de-judaised Jewess, so refractory to hope—with that patience which humanity owes to its own self.

THE WILTON DIPTYCH—II

By

E. W. TRISTRAM

II

WE may now turn our attention to the heraldry which figures in the painting. A strong case has been made out for regarding much of it as undoubtedly and necessarily concordant only with the last years of the reign; but such a conclusion is obviously at variance with our entire reading of the work so far. On the reverse of the right panel a shield is slung obliquely, with a helmet above it surmounted by a lion passant gardant upon a chapeau, the shield being charged with the arms of Edward the Confessor, impaling those of England. On the other panel, the White Hart is represented as lying among grass, flowers and bracken, with a coronet of gold about its neck, and a golden chain hanging from it. But before we study the history of the coat of arms, and of the emblem of the hart respectively, so far as they are known, we should pause to reflect again on the nature of this painting in which they are incorporated. Devotional articles in the form of diptychs are not infrequently mentioned in inventories of the possessions of royal personages and their close relatives at this period; and that their use was already traditional is indicated by a record dated about a hundred and forty years or more previously,¹ in which a small folding diptych is described in some detail. Such small diptychs were undoubtedly found to be useful for purposes of private devotion, for they

¹ *Chancellor's Roll*, 19 Henry III, E. 352/28.

could be folded up and easily transported, without risk of damage, from one room, or from one place, to another. Among small and precious diptychs listed in the inventories mentioned above are the following: a folding (tabula) picture with two images of silver gilt, representing the legend of the Confessor and the Pilgrim; another painted with "images" of divers colours: a third of gold, with four "images"; a fourth, also of gold, with three "images"; and yet a fifth—whether painted or of goldsmith's work is not stated—"with the image of St. John the Baptist in the middle."¹ Bearing all this evidence in mind, we may reasonably conclude, from the small scale of the Diptych and its gem-like quality that it was without doubt a private devotional painting, not intended for public display, but most probably for Richard's own oratory, or perhaps for that of someone closely related to him. Now this is a consideration which profoundly affects the arguments bearing upon the use of the Confessor's arms, and of the emblem of the hart. It has been forcibly argued that, in all probability, Richard did not publicly adopt either at an early date, the one before 1397-8, the other before 1390; and it has in consequence been urged that the Diptych cannot have been painted until near the close of the reign.²

But the argument fails to support this conclusion, if we have good reason to regard the Diptych as a private devotional picture; for the private, as distinct from the public, use both of the arms and of the emblem, can be traced to earlier dates. The arms of the Confessor, differenced with a label of three points, are known to have appeared on the seal of Richard's cousin, Edward, Earl of Rutland, as early as March, 1395³; and it is improbable that he would have assumed them even privately without the royal consent, or that in doing so he would have presumed so far as to anticipate their private use by Richard. Rutland's public assumption of them, with the royal consent, took place after he had been created Duke of Albemarle, and coincided with that of the four other new Dukes, Hereford, Norfolk, Surrey and Exeter, and also with Richard's public assumption of the arms, in 1397-8. These arms were regarded with the greatest veneration; and in

¹ Palgrave, *Antient Kalendars and Inventories of the Treasury*, 1836, III, 207, 313, 344, 345, 346, 349.

² M. V. Clarke, *Burlington Mag.*, 1931, LVIII, 284-7.

³ Douet d'Arcq, *Inventaires et Documents: Collection de Sceaux*, 1868, III, 294.

the reign of Henry VIII their assumption without the royal permission was made one of the chief counts against Henry, Earl of Surrey, son and heir of the Duke of Norfolk. There is a signet of Richard's which bears a shield identical with that on the Diptych; but unfortunately no precise date can be assigned to it. The earliest instance of its use so far known occurs in a warrant of October, 1395, stated to have been issued *sous nostre propre signet de Seint Edward*; but this leaves the date indeterminate.¹ If we remember that, on the day of his coronation, he wore the actual garments which were believed to have been those of the Confessor, and also how high aspiration soared on his behalf, it seems far from improbable that the private,² as distinct from the public, use of these arms dated from as early as the first year of the reign. To judge from the case of the Earl of Rutland, mentioned above, such a private use might be purely a matter of sentiment—for what reason had the Earl to impale the arms of the Confessor with his own, unless as a gesture arising from private devotion, and because, as we may conclude from his Christian name, Edward, the saintly king was his especial patron? The public assumption, however, even by the occupant of the throne, was clearly a very different matter, provoking, when it took place, on the part of those unsympathetic to Richard, some caustic comment and much resentment. To resume, although there is no definite evidence that the arms were used by him privately at an early date, there is, on the other hand, no definite evidence that they were not so used; and the considerations already urged tend at least to establish a fairly strong presumption in favour of the former of these alternatives, strengthened by the fact that St. Edward the Confessor had been his chosen patron all through his life.³

¹ T. F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England*, Manchester, 1930, V, 204. P. 201: "The sequence of Richard's signets, if sequence there were, cannot be determined in the light of our present knowledge . . . But very likely, indeed almost certainly, if the truth were known, we should find that Richard used several signets contemporaneously."

² It should be borne in mind that for evidence of the private, as distinct from the public use, we cannot rely upon the chronicles; we are reduced to a reliance upon chance references in inventories, and so on. Inventories naturally mention "the King's arms," without entering into detail.

³ If it could be shown that the reverse of the Diptych had been decorated at a later date than the obverse, all difficulty regarding the date of the heraldry here would, of course, disappear; but although this may have been the case, there can be no certainty on the point.

When we turn to a consideration of the White Hart, we find that very much the same line of argument leads to a like conclusion. As a badge, publicly distributed among his followers, it seems certain that Richard made use of it only late in the reign; but as an emblem, used privately or semi-privately, in one form or another, it is to be traced back as far as September, 1380, at which date three brooches of the hart, set with rubies, are included in a list of the royal jewels then pawned to the City of London.¹ That this emblem was an appropriate choice in every respect for him to have adopted, becomes evident when we read what Nicholas Upton² has to say of it: viz., that, if borne as an heraldic emblem, it is a sign that the bearer, or at least the first to assume it, was a singer, or found pleasure in songs and harmonies, wise and acute, looking well to his opportunities, reluctant to attack unarmed the enemy, but on the watch for a time when better able to attain his object. All this reflects the characteristics of the hart itself, as then conceived; which takes delight in song, and left defenceless by the loss of its horns in Spring, lies hid until the growth of its new horns provides it once more with the means of self-defence. Further, Upton has a legend to tell of a hart killed in Windsor forest, "at a certain stone called Be-saunteston near Bagshot," having about its neck a golden collar on which was inscribed "Julius Caesar placed this gold collar about my neck when I was small." Richard, too, it may be recalled, had musical gifts; and the fear of his uncles' ambitions, which haunted his entire reign, more than once forced him to submit and dissemble; and the legend of the hart with the gold collar is the English counterpart of that which had apparently led the French king, some years previously, to adopt the emblem of the flying hart, with a similar collar and motto. The association with Julius Caesar, as one of the great military leaders of the ancient world, would by itself explain the enthusiasm with which this emblem, though with slight variations, was adopted at that time. It is known to have been used in France, not only by the monarch, but also, c. 1350, by Peter, second Duke of Bourbon, and in England by Richard's step-brother, Thomas de Holland. Hopes or fears for the young king which the hart, in its various aspects, symbolizes, made themselves felt from the commence-

¹ Rymer, VII, 359.

² Nicholas Upton, *De Studio Militari*, 1654, Lib, IV, 159.

ment of his reign, at least among his intimates. They are implicit even in the choice of the coronation day itself. The ceremony had to take place *in die dominico vel in festo aliquo sollempni*¹ (i.e. *solemni*); and July 16th, chosen for Richard's coronation, was at Westminster a considerable feast, that of the Relics, among which, as we have already seen, were many associated with his patron the Confessor, including without doubt those of his garments worn on the occasion by the young king. But it was also, as Walsingham expressly states,² the eve of the feast of St. Kenelm King and Martyr, who having succeeded, like Richard, to the throne as a child, had fallen a victim to the ambitions of a sister. That his intercession, as well as that of St. Edward, was invoked at the opening of Richard's reign, by those intimately connected with him, can in the circumstances hardly be doubted.

As we have already noted, the hart is to be found as well on the front of the Diptych as on the back, in the former on Richard's robe, framed by circles composed of broomcods. Here we come to the greatest difficulty which the heraldic emblems present. It is needless to recapitulate in detail the evidence which has already been adduced elsewhere³ to show that the collar of broomcods was of the livery of the French king, who bestowed such a collar upon Richard on the occasion of his marriage with Isabella of France, and that therefore the date of the Diptych cannot be earlier than c. 1396. The suggestion has been made that it was painted on the occasion of the marriage; but it cannot be identified, even conjecturally, in the list of the wedding presents, drawn up carefully by the French when their restoration was eventually claimed from Henry IV. Further, before this theory can be accepted, three serious objections must be removed: why the young bride is not represented; why her arms do not appear upon the reverse; and why no French Saint is introduced as a compliment to her nationality. If the Diptych belongs to the period of the French marriage, the absence of her arms, as distinct from any badge which may perhaps be hers, seems inexplicable; unless it be supposed that the work was painted between 1395 and 1396, i.e., between the opening of the negotiations and the

¹ *Ordo Consecrationis Regis, Missale ad usum Ecclesie Westmonasteriensis*, Henry Bradshaw Soc., 1893, V, col. 674.

² *Historia Anglicana*, 1863, I, 332.

³ M. V. Clarke, *Burlington Mag.*, 1931, LVIII, 84-9.2

celebration of the marriage, and that Richard having during this interval received as a gift the French collar of broomcods, had himself painted wearing it, for some obscure reason not as the bearded man he actually was, but as a boy. If we can surmount the unlikely assumptions involved in all this, then we may suppose that the eleven Angels also wear the collar to signify their exultation at the prospect of accord between England and France and their hope that the two sovereigns would soon unite to embark upon a crusade. But such an interpretation is too strained and far-fetched to carry much conviction. On the other hand, if we adhere to the opinion, supported in the main by all the other evidence to be drawn from the painting (including the stylistic evidence, which we have not yet considered), that the Diptych is of an early date in the reign, what explanation, even partially satisfactory, can be given of the presence of the French collar, if it be French, and of the emphasis laid upon the broom as an emblem?

At this point it is pertinent to ask ourselves whether the collar worn by Richard in the Diptych is in fact the one sent to him by Charles VI of France? In the jeweller's account for the gift, the collar is expressly stated to have been "*pareil au collier du Roy*" (de France). The same account too gives a detailed description of the latter which reveals serious discrepancies between it and that represented in the painting. It would be easy, of course, to object to this that, if the painter were English, he might well have been unfamiliar with the French collar, although he was clearly aware of the least detail of the White Hart badge. But, if the painting is assumed to have been executed just before the marriage, the collar must be regarded as a notable feature in it; and surely care would have been taken to ensure the painter's accuracy in all respects; further, it is obvious that he was more than competent as an heraldic artist, and so would have known that every detail of the heraldry must have a definite meaning. But where are the broom flowers? Where the entwined stalks, enamelled respectively in white and in green? Above all, for this is hardly a minor feature of the collar—where are the fifty letters of gold, hanging from it and forming ten times the royal motto JAMES?¹ There is

¹ i.e., JAMAIS. Recorded instances of its representation in French work are to be found, but there appear to be no French instances of representations of the collar without it.

no mention of roses in the description of the French collar; but small roses, either enamelled in white, on Richard's, or, on those about the necks of the Angels and represented on his robe, executed in gold, link the broomcods together in all the collars to be seen in the Diptych. Now, in the first year of his reign, a "golden garter" was made for Richard, the design of which included roses;¹ roses appear upon his robe in the Abbey portrait, as they once did in the decoration of its background;² rose bushes are to be seen in the carvings of Westminster Hall, together with the emblem of the Hart; and roses are frequently mentioned as having formed part of the decoration of articles inventoried among his possessions or those of his close relatives.³ The Angels in the Diptych wear crowns of roses, and roses are freely scattered over the ground in the panel on the right. The rose, then, would seem to have had some special significance for Richard; perhaps on account of its association with the Blessed Virgin,⁴ perhaps in connexion with the golden rose presented to his ancestor Edward I, by the Pope, and in the fourteenth century still preserved in the Treasury.³ Among the items in an inventory of jewels, etc., made in the first year of Henry IV, all previously belonging to persons who, with one exception only, were connected with the royal house, and some of them undoubtedly once the property of Richard, there is a collar of gold decorated with mascles and white roses;⁵ but since we have no description of a collar of Richard's, we cannot assume that it was his. It may be noted here, however, that, besides roses, mascles are to be seen in the Abbey portrait of him, on the crown and the collar clasp of his cloak,⁶ and in the Diptych also they appear on the crown, while one, though this is not very clearly delineated,

¹ Anstis, *Register of the Order of the Garter*, I, 55.

² The decoration was destroyed, except for one small section, some eighty years ago, under the mistaken impression that it was not part of the original work.

³ Palgrave, *The Antient Kalendars and Inventories of the Treasury*, 1836, III, 313 *et seq.*, 80.

⁴ See, for example, the *Oxford Book of English Verse*, 1939, II, 12, for poems in honour of the Virgin.

⁵ For the symbolic significance of the rose, see Émile Mâle, *Art in France of the Thirteenth Century*, London, 1913, 30, and *L'Art religieux de la fin du moyen âge*, Paris, 1925, 207.

⁶ Found in such positions as these, and at a comparatively early date, the lozenge-shape, voided in the centre, must have been used heraldically, with definite intention, and not idly, as a mere decorative motif.

seems to form the central feature of the collar of broomcods, the "voided" centre being filled by a jewel. It has been stated that there is no evidence to show that Richard ever had a collar of his own¹; but this is a mistake, since, from a record of 1394, we learn that two goldsmiths of London were then paid for making two collars for him,² their cost, with that of another minor item, amounting to the large sum of £66 13s. 4d. There can be no doubt that they were intended for Richard's own use, since the wording of the entry admits of no misunderstanding; it runs "in money paid to them for making two collars, and one stud of gold, ornamented with pearls and precious stones, for the Lord the King's person." If it be recalled that his consort, Anne, had her collars of rosemary and ostrich, and his uncles theirs, the latter already in 1389, we shall be slow to conclude that the sovereign himself, unlike them, was without this distinction until 1394, even though he is known to have worn his uncle Lancaster's collar on occasion in token of friendship.³ Also, it must be remembered that, for some reason, evidence pointing to the existence of collars before 1400 is scanty; we should not even know of Lancaster's collar, nor of those of the other uncles, apart from the one reference to Richard's wearing of the former; nor of Anne's, were it not for the solitary mention in the inventory of 1400, quoted above. Considering our lack of information, it would be extremely hazardous to attempt to draw any conclusion from the inventories. It has been claimed⁴ that the absence of any reference to livery collars in the inventory of the goods of Sir Simon Burley, drawn up at his own order in 1387, may be regarded as proof that the great men of the period did not wear such collars until late in the reign; and at first sight the claim would appear to be incontrovertible, since Burley was not only prominent at Court but high in the royal favour, and since, further, the inventory in question seems to have been intended to be exhaustive. But one point has been overlooked, that while the plate was dealt with separately, the jewels were altogether omitted;⁵ and it seems obvious that collars such as those which we have been discussing, would have been classed with the

¹ M. V. Clarke, *Burlington Mag.*, LVIII, 289.

² *Issues of the Exchequer*, ed. Fred Devon, 1837, 253.

³ *Rot. Parl.*, III, 313.

⁴ M. V. Clarke, *Burlington Mag.*, LVIII, 298.

⁵ M. V. Clarke, *Fourteenth Century Studies*, Oxford, 1937, 119-20.

latter. Thus, they appear in the list of jewels, and gold and silver plate delivered out of the Treasury in the year 1400, to which reference has already twice been made. Finally, the absence of collars upon the effigies of the period can hardly be cited as proof that they were not worn; since, although, as has been stated, we know that Anne of Bohemia possessed collars of her livery, we shall look in vain for any representation of one upon her effigy in the Abbey.

There is then at least a possibility that the collar shown upon Richard in the Diptych may be his own, or one which he wore on occasion. Even if we are convinced that it is French, this does not necessarily prove that it was never adopted and worn, either in a spirit of emulation or in token of alliance, by our English monarchs. On the contrary, there is abundant evidence to prove that they did, at times, wear the French livery, including the collar. In spite of the jealousies and rivalries constantly cropping up between the English and the French royal houses, there existed also, though sometimes broken, an uneasy alliance which, while it lasted, entailed the presentation of gifts and honours. Thus, Edward III, in his thirty-sixth and again in his fortieth year, received a robe of the livery of the French sovereign at Christmas; and it is recorded by Froissart that Henry IV, on the day of his coronation, when relations with Charles VI were, to say the least, strained, wore about his neck what, according to the same authority, was "the device of the King of France." A state of actual hostility prevailed at the period of Richard's accession; yet efforts for peace, including projects for a French marriage, were being made very early in the reign.¹ It may well be supposed that, as the scene shifted from war to peace between the two countries, with times when peace hung in the balance, such a device as the broomcod collar might be worn, in token now of alliance, now of defiance.² For it should not be forgotten that, as an emblem of fealty, the collar, like the robes of the French livery, emphasized the position of the reigning English monarch as owing some allegiance to the French sovereign; and that his attitude towards the wearing of either must have varied, as the hereditary claims to the throne of France were successively put forward, dropped and revived from the reign of Edward III

¹ *Issues of the Exchequer*, ed. Fred. Devon, 1837, 215.

² It appears to have been adopted in France before 1368.

onwards. The rival claims of the sovereigns undoubtedly extended even to the devices which they adopted; thus, the kings of England followed the French in their use of the arms, first of France Ancient, then of France Modern; and, as we have seen the hart was adopted here after it had first been put into use as a badge in France. Likewise, the French legend of the Sainte Ampoule was countered by that of the miraculous oil of unction bestowed upon St. Thomas of Canterbury. The later English history of the broomcod collar confirms the conclusions put forward above. Thus, in an inventory of the crown jewels made after the death of Henry V, a collar of broomcods is described¹; and in the fourth year of Henry VI a slight variant was introduced,² a collar being made for the infant king composed of the letter S combined with broomcods, thus associating the latter with an emblem then belonging to the English royal house. At this time having through his council of regency asserted his claim to the sovereignty of France, he had been proclaimed king of France in Paris. In view of all these currents and cross-currents of evidence in its regard, it must be admitted that to assign a date to the Diptych in virtue of the collar alone, would hardly be justifiable.

Finally, we should remember that neither the name Plantagenet, nor the emblem of the broom, an obvious rebus for that name, was unknown to the English royal house at this period, though both may perhaps have been in abeyance for a very long time before Richard's accession. If the rivalry between the royal houses of England and France extended to the broom in his day (as it did to other emblems, and even to the oil of unction), which seems highly probable, and becomes certain of the period less than some twenty-five years after his death—then it is hardly likely to have been forgotten that Plantagenet had been the nickname of Geoffrey, Count of Anjou, father of Henry II, and that this connection in itself constituted a claim to the use of the broom as a badge. Richard, in the effigy on his tomb, does not wear a collar of broom or of any other type; nor, as we have already seen, does his consort, although she is recorded to have possessed two collars; but the broom plant appears upon his robes, together with the hart and the sunburst. We have studied the hart at some

¹ Anstis, II, 115, quoting Patent Rolls 1 Henry VI, and Parl. Rolls 2 Henry VI.

² *Ibid.*, 115.

length, and it seems impossible to doubt that it was deliberately chosen for its symbolic meaning, and was of intimate personal significance to Richard; and the same may be said, if with less assurance, about the sunburst. This appears on the oldest known patent of arms, dated 1438-9, and granted to the Drapers Company of London, in which it is stated that the sunburst signifies the Blessed Virgin, "who is in the shadow of the sun yet shines with all clearness and purity."¹ We have seen that Richard, and certain among his predecessors, had a special reason for marked devotion to her; and in this we may probably find the origin of his adoption of the sunburst as a badge. Since these two emblems seem to have been chosen for the tomb with deliberate intention and grave meaning, it seems the more unlikely that the third, the broom-plant, should have been adopted merely out of compliment to a very recently contracted French alliance by marriage, especially since the effigy, by Richard's own direction, was to lie beside that of Anne of Bohemia, his beloved first consort, with the right hands joined.

III

We may now turn our attention to the stylistic and technical features apparent in the painting. By close comparison with miniatures of the period, it becomes evident that it is not at all likely to have been executed near the end of the reign; for since it is obviously the work of an artist of the first rank, it may be expected that it would exhibit the most recent stylistic developments. Among these, late in the century, perhaps one of the most noticeable was the change in the representation of the human figure, the tall, somewhat severe type being abandoned in favour of one squarer and more solid, which eventually sometimes approached the squat and ungainly. This change is manifest in the Bible of Richard II,² certain Cuttings from a Missal in the British Museum,³ in the Bedford⁴ and the Beaufort Hours,⁵ in the Chichele Breviary,⁶ and in later work of the first half of the

¹ *Heraldry in England*, A. Wagner, 1946, 30.

² British Mus., Royal MS. IE IX.

³ *Ibid.*, Add. MS. 42131.

⁴ Lambeth Palace, MS. 69.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Add. MS. 29704 and 29705.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Royal MS. 2 A XVIII.

next century. In some of these books it is less marked than in others; and in the Lectionary of Siferwas¹ and in the Sherborne Missal², still less evident, exceptions being found, such as the Virgin and Child represented within a niche adjacent to the miniature of the Circumcision, in the first mentioned, where the figure of the Virgin, and in particular the drapery, are to some extent reminiscent of the Virgin of the Diptych. On the other hand, little of the tendency shows itself in the Missal of Nicholas Lytlington, dated 1383-4, or in the *Liber Regalis*.³ In the French miniatures and drawings which have been compared with the Diptych, i.e., in the *Psautier* of Jean, Duc de Berri, in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, and in his *Belles Heures*, at Brussels, it is established, and, like the drawings from a sketch-book in the Pierpont Morgan Collection,⁴ which have been attributed to André Beauneveu, they also show a far greater degree of Italian influence than is apparent in the Diptych; and they do not compare with it in point of realistic delineation. To appreciate this it is enough to compare the series of prophets by Beauneveu in the *Psautier* with the Saints in the Diptych, or the Holy Child and the Baptist with the analogous figures in the *Belles Heures*. The general arrangement of the companion miniatures of the Duc de Berri and his patrons, and of the Virgin and Child, in this last-named manuscript, is similar; but the resemblance is purely iconographical, accidental, and superficial.

When we turn to English miniatures of the end of the century, however, we find a number of examples which, though of rather later date than seems probable for the Diptych, nevertheless offer some unmistakable stylistic approximations. It has already been pointed out⁵ that some heads of the Virgin in the Beaufort Hours (f. 23 b.) and in the Bedford Hours (ff. 21 b. and 22 a.), and especially in the former, show definite resemblances to the Virgin of the Diptych, both in the type of head depicted and in the design of the drapery surrounding it. It may be remarked here in passing that she is obviously intended to conform to the type of female beauty most admired in England at the time, as are also most of the Angels attendant upon her; neither she nor they

¹ British Mus., Harl. MS. 7026.

² Alnwick Castle, Library of the Duke of Northumberland.

³ Both in Westminster Abbey Library.

⁴ Roger Fry, *Burlington Mag.*, 1906, X, 31-8.

⁵ W. A. Shaw, *Burlington Mag.*, 1934, LXV, 176, pl. iii.

nor the Saints depicted, have anything in common with the Italianate types of the miniatures in the French manuscripts. The Virgin of the Diptych, in fact, might have been drawn from Chaucer's Prioress: "Ful semyly hir wympul pynched was; hire nose tretys, her eyen greye as glas, hir mouth ful smal and ther-to softe and reed, but sikerly she hadde a fair forheed; it was almoost a spanne brood I trowe." If we are to hold that a foreign painter, apparently unknown in his own country, where neither he nor his successors have left any comparable works, came to England and painted the Diptych, then we must credit him with a surprisingly vivid appreciation of English types, and a remarkable power of rendering them. Some of these still persist among us, for the more typical of the Angels we see passing in our streets, even in this twentieth century. But to return, after this digression, to a comparison with English work, quite a marked resemblance to the head of the Confessor, and the treatment of his robes, so far as they are visible, may be detected in the Bedford Hours, within an initial on f. 9b.; and to one of the Angels, in another initial on f. 32 b.; and further, on f. 7b., although there is no resemblance in the heads of the Angel or of the Virgin in the Annunciation within an initial to those in the Diptych, nevertheless the design, colour and handling of the drapery of the Virgin in both, especially the colour and handling, are much alike. On the whole, some of the miniatures in the Bedford Hours present closer and more numerous resemblances than do those from any other manuscript; but they are evidently later in date, and certainly not by the same hand. However, they do appear to be the work of a man flourishing some years—perhaps even twenty-five years or more—later, who either came from the same centre and inherited the same traditions or had familiarized himself with the work of the painter of the Diptych, and was to some extent following him. Now it is virtually certain that an English illuminator working for John, Duke of Bedford, son of Henry IV, was familiar with all the notable paintings then surviving at Westminster, whether in the Palace or the Abbey. In his youth he may well have been acquainted with the painters who had been employed there years before, and could hardly have failed later to put himself on friendly terms with their immediate successors. The technique of the small portrait heads which abound in this superb Bedford manuscript very closely resembles that employed

in the rendering of heads, hands, etc., in the Diptych, allowance being made for the difference in the scale, and probably also in the medium used. There is the same light green, unmodelled under-painting,¹ and the flesh tints are handled in very much the same manner. This under-painting also appears, though there it is less clearly discernible, in the Bible of Richard II. In addition to the resemblances already noted, which associate the Diptych with English work, there are still others. Thus, the small woods depicted here and there in the Beaufort Hours, in the Cuttings from a Missal already mentioned, and in the Bible of Richard II, recall to some extent that in the Diptych behind the figure of the Baptist²—small woods are to be seen in contemporary French miniatures also, but are there treated in a much less realistic way; wreaths of roses encircle the heads of girls on ff. 79 and 166 of the Bible; and the grass patterned with flowers and leaves, upon a very dark green, almost black ground, whether in handling or in design is not unlike that in the panel of the White Hart. Grounds patterned in this way, naturally with variations as time went on, had been traditional in English painting from the late thirteenth century onwards.³ In French fourteenth-century miniatures they are of a yellow or bluish green, and the flowers and leaves are less closely observed than in the English examples. Our earliest painting, c. 1340, of an Angel's head, depicted as of a piquant, girlish type, with curling golden hair bound by a fillet ornamented with roses, is to be found in an Annunciation at South Newington, Oxfordshire.

The gilded backgrounds on both panels of the Diptych are exquisitely tooled and "pounced"; and the design on Richard's robe and on the drapery about the Holy Child is rendered by means of the most minute and elaborate tooling and "pouncing" conceivable. It is a question whether, apart from a fairly large number of English miniatures of a rather earlier date, anything so superb of its kind, for richness of design and extreme delicacy of execution, can be found elsewhere. Similar work, inevitably rather coarser since the scale is much larger, is to be seen in some French examples,⁴ and upon the effigies of Richard II's tomb;

¹ See, e.g., ff. 21a, 27a, 206b.

² Respectively, on ff. 7 and 10; f. 25; ff. 4, 16.

³ E. W. Tristram, *English Medieval Wall Painting*, II, pls. 7, 192.

⁴ e.g., the *Pietà* in the Troyes Museum.

but there seems to be nothing of the kind in French miniatures, on a comparable scale to that seen in some English miniatures, which reaches this standard, whether at this period or earlier in the century.¹ In contemporary and earlier fourteenth-century French miniatures gold backgrounds seem to be comparatively rare, especially finely tooled gold, those diapered or otherwise patterned in colour, or in gold and colour, being preferred, whereas in English work they are abundant before the second half of the fourteenth century, and later specimens are to be found. The fine tooling and "pouncing" on the effigies of Richard and Anne indicates that the method was still popular with the Court even in the last decade of the century, or at least that it was liked by the king himself, under whose careful directions the work was executed.

As to the Sherborne Missal again, we find that there is some similarity between the Angels' wings as depicted in the Diptych and on pp. 216 and 276 of the manuscript. The vivid and sympathetic way in which these wings, as well as the White Hart in the painting, are represented, is characteristically English; for nowhere else at this time are there to be found such excellent renderings of birds and animals as those from the hand of John Siferwas, and those in the Pepysian sketchbook.²

It has often been observed that, in its exquisite finish and delicacy, and to some extent in its technical characteristics, the Diptych has the appearance of a manuscript illumination, but one carried out on a larger scale than was normal for that kind of work. There is a little documentary evidence to show that lay illuminators, like their monastic brethren, were sometimes responsible for panel paintings as well as for illuminations, at least until the close of the thirteenth century. Thus, in its last decade, a certain Richard of March, illuminator, was paid *pro uno psalterio luminando, et una pari tabularum, ad opus Reginae*.³ But, by the last quarter of the fourteenth century, under the influence of the Guild system, then fully established, the division between the work of the painter of panels and that of the illuminator of

¹ A near approach, on a much more restricted scale, however, is to be seen in the "Bedford Missal"; see ff. 14 and 17a.

² Cambridge, Magdalene College, Pepysian Library, M.S. 1916; see comments by John Harvey, *Gothic England*, 1947, 63.

³ *Manners and Household Expenses in the Thirteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, Roxburghe Club, 1841, LVII, 103.



RICHARD II



GROUP OF FOUR ANGELS



THE BLESSED VIRGIN AND CHILD



SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

books, may have been more rigidly defined than it had been some eighty years earlier, although the marked resemblances between certain miniatures and some wall-paintings such as those at South Newington, suggest that this was not the case. Further, some miniatures of the period exhibit characteristics indicating that they may have been the work of painters by trade rather than of illuminators. But for obvious reasons, any division, if in fact any rigid division existed, would not have affected the painters who were also ecclesiastics. It is clear that considerable artistic activity still persisted in the various Orders, whether monastic or mendicant, and had, in fact, increased considerably among the Franciscans, as their earlier strict rule in such matters had come to be relaxed. Among painters and illuminators who were not laymen, we may mention a Franciscan of Canterbury who, in 1351, illuminated a book for the Lady Elizabeth de Burgh¹; John, a canon of St. Catherine's by the Tower, who, in 1365 and earlier, was painter to Edward III²; another Franciscan from Dundee, who, after 1375, was appointed "first king's limner"³; and the well-known Dominican, John Siferwas, chief illuminator of the Sherborne Missal.

Taking all the evidence into consideration, it seems that there is some reason to conclude that, if the painter of the Diptych was English, he may have been a monk or a friar; and the curious anticipation of the work of Fra Angelico which has often been noted in it, gives some colour to the conclusion, considered together with its resemblance to an illumination. But this resemblance, even if a rigid division of labour between lay painters and illuminators did in fact prevail, which is by no means certain, might nevertheless have been found in the work of a lay painter employed by the Court, since we know that they were not bound by some of the Guild rules,⁴ and in practice were probably allowed wide latitude. And thus there is no impossibility to bar the supposition that a layman, whether English or foreign, may have been responsible for it. But it should be said at once that

¹ A. G. Little, *Franciscan History and Legend in English Medieval Art*, Manchester, 1937, 39.

² *Issues of the Exchequer*, ed. Fred. Devon, 1837, 160, 184-5.

³ A. R. Macewen, *History of the Church in Scotland*, I, 294-5.

⁴ Ordinances of the Painters, *Liber Horn*, f. 341 *et seq.*: e.g., "No one shall work on Sundays, nor on the four feasts of Our Lady . . . save under royal compulsion."

there is no documentary evidence whatever to show that Richard II departed from the custom of his predecessors and immediate successors, of employing English painters almost to the exclusion of all others. On the contrary, even more than Henry III, to judge from the records, he was content to employ Englishmen. Among them, Gilbert Prince would appear to be the most likely choice as painter of the Diptych; for at the date here assigned to it, he was receiving large sums from Richard, amounting in one instance alone to a considerable fortune,¹ which the painter on acceptance returned to the king in the form of a loan. Although we have no recorded details of Prince's work, other than what may be termed shop work, such as was evidently carried out by his apprentices and assistants, we are justified in assuming that the great sums involved must have covered, not only heraldic painting and the production of appurtenances for use on festive occasions, but also work of a higher order, not, unfortunately, specified in the accounts. It is abundantly proved, from a variety of records, and in particular from Prince's own will,² that he was a man of exceptional wealth and standing for his times; and there appears to be no reason to think that he was any exception to the custom, traceable from the days of Henry III down to the eighteenth century, in conformity with which the chief Court painters, although they were made responsible for the execution or supervision of work of an inferior order, were nevertheless called upon to carry out wall or panel paintings of great importance.³ Even if we suppose that the Diptych was commissioned, not by or on behalf of the young king himself, but by a relative or some prominent adherent, still such documentary evidence as there is goes to show that they no less than he, availed themselves of the services of English painters, notably this same Gilbert Prince. Before Richard's accession he had been employed by Edward III; he evidently worked for Sir Simon Burley⁴; the Duke of Lancaster made use of his gifts⁵; from his shop he supplied appropriate fittings, mainly heraldic in character, for the funerals of many of the great personages of the times,

¹ Issues of the Exchequer, ed. Fred. Devon, 1837, pp. 184, 207, 252.

² Husting Roll, 124 (100).

³ E. W. Tristram, *English Medieval Wall Painting*, II, 414-15.

⁴ M. V. Clarke, *Fourteenth Century Studies*, Oxford, 1937, 122.

⁵ *John of Gaunt's Register*, 1372-6, Camden Third Series No. 1682; *Close Rolls*, 1377-81, 381.

such as Joan, Queen of Scotland, the Duchess of Brittany, the Princess of Wales, mother of Richard II, Ralph, Earl of Stafford, the Countess of St. Pol, Anne of Bohemia, and her mother the Empress. On every great occasion his co-operation was enlisted—on the king's birthday, in the arrangements for tournaments, and even in preparation for the king's first journey to Ireland. It is obvious that he must have maintained a flourishing establishment, and this conclusion is confirmed by his will, which shows him to have been an employer of labour on a considerable scale. In both 1383 and 1393 he received grants of exemption from serving on assizes or juries, etc., the last being for life; and such exemptions, to judge from other records, were bestowed only upon the foremost among the craftsmen in royal employment.¹ He was a member of the Common Council of the City of London in 1384, 1385, 1386, and 1388; and as early as 1376 he was a leading member of the Painters' Guild. In that capacity, he would inevitably have been concerned in preparations for the pageant arranged on the occasion of Richard's accession, and referred to previously as recalling the Diptych by many of its features.

There is some slight documentary evidence showing that a German artist of repute, Herebrecht of Cologne, was working in London in 1398. He may, of course, have come to this country earlier. It is also established that works by André Beauneveu were imported into England at this period. But there is no shred of proof that either of these men, or any other foreign painter, was in the employment of any great man intimately connected with the Court. On the other hand, as we have seen, there is conclusive proof that English artists were employed, by the king, by his father, the Black Prince,² by his grandfather, Edward III,³ by his uncle Lancaster,⁴ and by his intimate friend and adherent, Sir Simon Burley. Further, there is ample evidence available from earlier times, which all goes to show that the employment of foreigners as Court painters had been always rare in the extreme.⁵

¹ As, for example, William de Ramseye, King's Mason, and the better-known Henry de Yevele.

² *Black Prince's Register*, 1372-76, IV, 35, 151, 388.

³ *Issues of the Exchequer*, ed. Fred. Devon, 1837, 184.

⁴ *John of Gaunt's Register*, 1372-6, Camden 3rd series, No. 1682.

⁵ From c. 1250 onwards to c. 1425, only one Court painter of prominence is known who can be shown with virtual certainty to have been a foreigner—Peter of Spain. The more notable names during this period of 175 years are: William of Westminster, Walter of Durham, Thomas of Westminster, Jack of

Moreover, as we have seen, such evidence as can be drawn from a study of the stylistic and technical features apparent in the Diptych favours the theory of an English as against that of a foreign origin; as also does the general historical evidence, since, if we are justified in assigning to the painting an early date in the reign, it is obvious that contact with foreign schools, and in particular with that of France, was then comparatively slight, although towards the end of the century it became much closer. Upon all the considerations brought forward here, it would seem that we are justified in assigning the Diptych to the hand of an English Court painter of the period c. 1377, and if so, then with some considerable probability, to that of Gilbert Prince.

St. Albans, Hugh of St. Albans, John Barnaby, Gilbert Prince, Thomas Litlington, Thomas Wryght, and Thomas Kent. Even among lesser men names of foreign origin are both rare and often doubtful. See E. W. Tristram, *English Medieval Wall Painting*, II, 443-57, and Appendix (in particular *re* John of St. Omer and William Florentin).

MONSIGNOR KNOX'S OLD TESTAMENT

INTRODUCTORY

Thomas Corbishley

THOSE of us who have reached middle age will recall a recruiting poster put out during the other war, portraying a child asking, after the manner of children: "What did you do during the Great War, Daddy?" It is interesting to reflect that a similar question addressed to Mgr. Knox about this War might elicit the answer: "Oh, I translated the Bible." Few men, during those years of destruction, can have spent their time more profitably. It is not quite true that he finished the whole translation during the war, except in the sense that the war is still with us; and it is most emphatically untrue that he did nothing else. But the statement serves to underline the magnitude of the achievement represented by the publication of the first volume of the Old Testament in English.

I have wanted to say something of the background of the work for several reasons. Quite frankly the one that is uppermost in my own mind, however unimportant it may be in itself, is the desire to add my personal tribute. But there are others. In the first place, the very magnitude of the achievement may obscure the heroic efforts that have gone to its making. I have often come across critics who ought to know better, who have spoken as though the work had been carried out with insufficient care and with too great haste, so that I feel that something less than justice has been done to the immense and conscientious thoroughness of the translator. Again, although he has given public expression to the principles which have guided him all through, there are still many who do not seem to have grasped them. And in any case, I hope there will be a certain interest in these glimpses of the man at work.

The natural starting-point for my remarks seems to be a short conversation which I had with Mgr. Knox soon after the news became public that he had been commissioned to undertake the task he has now completed. When I asked him how long he expected to take over the whole thing, he told me that he proposed to begin with the New Testament, which he hoped to finish in three years. That was in the uneasy year between Munich and the outbreak of war, when no one could foresee the conditions in which life in England would be lived during those forthcoming three years. It was on St. Jerome's Day, September 30, 1939, that he set to work. Poland was prostrate; in the West we hardly knew that the war was on. Narvik, Sedan, the Battle of Britain were far ahead. It was the onset of the active war in the West which, incidentally, associated me a little more closely with the work in hand. Fr. Martindale was a member of a small committee of readers which had been assembled to offer advice and criticism, and when, by an unfortunate coincidence by which he arrived in Denmark on the very eve of the German occupation, he was no longer available, I was invited to take his place. I accepted with pleasure tempered by some misgivings. The misgivings were due not merely to a decent modesty which shrank from taking over from a man of Fr. Martindale's eminence, but still more from a fear of seeming to play the pig to Mgr. Knox's Minerva.

It is necessary to say a word about the function and method of working of that committee. Our purpose was partly censorial, partly advisory, partly critical. As each Gospel or Epistle was finished it was circulated to the different members, who sent in their comments for consideration by the translator. He commented on our comments, explained why he could not agree to our objections or submitted alternatives. Throughout I was profoundly impressed with his great modesty and generous forbearance. There were times when I felt a little like an oafish intruder criticizing my host's taste in pictures to his face, but the general attitude assumed by the host was that, however tiresome we might be, we were all very well-intentioned and at least under the impression that we were being helpful.

The original intention was that there should be frequent meetings of the committee at which it would be possible to discuss passages together and hear the translator's *apologia*. The

terrors of wartime travel threw an added burden on him, for it was now necessary to do practically all the work by correspondence, which meant an enormous labour in circulating translation, criticisms, reply to criticisms, new versions and final drafts in an interminable stream. One characteristic incident at the only meeting of the Committee to take place after I joined it was an attack by Fr. Hugh Pope on the use of "hampers" to translate *spurides*, in the account of the Feeding of the Four Thousand. "It suggests nothing more nor less than a picnic," he complained. Unabashed, the defendant replied: "But that's exactly what the whole *scene* suggests to me." The intended criticism, it would seem, was really a compliment.

It was some little time after this meeting that I paid my first visit to Aldenham Park, the house of the Actons, which had offered hospitality to Mgr. Knox for the duration of his task. It had also, now, offered hospitality to the nuns and children of the Assumption Convent, Kensington, a concurrence of events which was to give us, as well as the *New Testament in English*, the *Mass in Slow Motion* and the *Creed in Slow Motion*. There he was to lead the life of a beleaguered scholar. All about him flowed the life of the school, penning him into a single room, where he had collected the library of essential books which he used for the translation. These included all the standard commentaries, almost every existing translation (except, I think, Wyclif's Bible), an assortment of texts and the *Oxford English Dictionary*. I mention these facts, which might otherwise have been taken for granted, because amongst other criticism, I have heard it stated that the translator was cramped in his work by a lack of the necessary or desirable books. It is just not true. The *Oxford English Dictionary* was important because of Mgr. Knox's principle of translating into a "timeless English." No word or phrase was admitted unless evidence could be alleged to show that it had been in more or less consistent use for three hundred years. Often enough, what might seem at first sight the obvious rendering was ruled out because it involved the use of some word or phrase which was a newcomer to the language and might go out of fashion as quickly as it had come in. What astonished me was not the speed with which the work was done. On the contrary, the impression created was one of painful slowness. Only sheer persistence produced the results in such a

short space of time. A chapter a day was his aim, and even that seemed a lavish ration. The periods during which the typewriter was in action were so brief in comparison with the long pauses, the thumbing of book after book, the meditative saunter across to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the occasional interjected remark or question about possible alternatives to some word that had not passed scrutiny.

Meanwhile I would be sitting in a corner, reading over passages that had already been through the hands of the Committee, collating opinions and adding my own. On one such occasion, I remember being overcome with a sense of presumption when I had queried some half-dozen renderings in succession. "What do you feel about it yourself?" I asked. "Well, you see—perhaps it's because I am the youngest of several brothers—whenever *anyone* queries anything I have written, I always feel that they must be right. Mind you, I always react in violent defence—perhaps for the same reason. . . ." What almost invariably happened was that, whilst the proposed version might not seem perfect, no possible alternative could be suggested to improve on it, and in the end I was nearly always convinced that there was no conceivable way of emending the passage. Occasionally, between us, we succeeded in hammering out some better rendering. More rarely still, I was able to suggest some turn of phrase that could be accepted.

None of this is put down with the idea of suggesting that I played anything but a very insignificant role in the whole work. The translation is Mgr. Knox's and no one else's. But I do most strongly declare that whatever criticisms may be made of the translation, its defects are not due to a failure on his part to take any step necessary to ensure accuracy of rendering and appropriateness of diction. When you bear in mind that the situation I have indicated, of which I was a spectator on some half-dozen occasions, went on for nine solid years (the end of the war meant the end of the beleaguered condition of things, but did not mean an end of the tireless round of reference, consultation, checking and correction) you will get some faint idea of the monumental patience needed to produce even the New Testament.

With the Old Testament I had but rare and casual acquaintance. I remember being disturbed by the translation of the Psalms when I first read the manuscript. There was something about it

I did not care for; but what precisely I disliked I could not specify. Then I put the manuscript away to read Thursday Prime. *Dominus regit me et nihil mihi deerit* . . . That was it. No translation would please me, because I wanted the old familiar Latin. I was able to keep the manuscript by me for a time, until on one of my visits to Aldenham I took it out in the train and read it straight through. This time it captured me at once. I saw the Psalms, for the first time, not as part of my daily prayer, but as the outpourings of the men who wrote them. No longer liturgical pieces, they were a human document. To have had such an effect implies a remarkable quality in the rendering.

However, it is no business of mine to evaluate the quality of the translation from the scholarly or artistic point of view. All I have tried to do is to estimate the sheer effort that has gone to its making. The mere achievement in itself is a source of lawful pride and profound encouragement. The consciousness of an enormous public that has come to appreciate the Scriptures as never before is, in itself, reward enough. But gratitude is all too shy of finding expression and ungracious criticism all too vociferous. It is for us to recognize the immense debt we owe to the one man who did all this.

A LITERARY OPINION

Evelyn Waugh

OTHERS abide our question. Mgr. Knox has proved again and again with dazzling versatility that he is complete master of the English language. He could have given us the Old Testament as any stylist of any period would have rendered it. What he has in fact done is to devise a specific prose style, which has the flavour neither of patristic Latin nor renaissance English. Its nearest kin is late Pre-Raphaelite—Mallorycum-Saga—shorn of all quaintness, but no comparison is significant for it is something unique.

He employs this style throughout making, as far as I can discern, no distinctions of period. Noe and Nehemias speak like contemporaries; they are figures in the same drama, drawn from an undefined heroic age. The characters of the Authorized Version, God included, are Elizabethans; one sees them in doublet and ruff staring flatly down from panelled walls, sly, violent, enigmatic men, the founders of dynasties. Mgr. Knox's characters are not of the twentieth century; nor are they Arab sheiks from Doughty; they are less noble than their forbears of 1611. They are in fact precisely what they should be, men and women living in a fallen and unredeemed world, haunted by ancestral memories of a lost Eden, taught by hints and portents, punished by frightful dooms, people half lost waiting for something to happen.

There is little poetry in this first volume. The lay reader when he has striven hopelessly to visualize those preposterous architectural objects, Jachin and Booz, will leave the interior decoration with the genealogies and laws, and concentrate his attention on the pure narrative. It is extremely difficult to read it without being distracted by echoes of earlier translations. (How much more difficult for the translator!) Phrase after phrase of the Authorized Version has become part of established English usage. If I ask: "Am I my brother's keeper?" it is recognized that I am quoting. But what if Mgr. Knox's Cain uses that phrase? The reader's reflection is: "How odd that Cain should have been reading the Bible! And, anyway, would it not be more loyal of him to read it in Mgr. Knox's version?" While if he says: "Is it for me to keep watch over my brother?" the reflection is: "There's Cain muffing his lines."

The problem really is not soluble. One must come fresh to Mgr. Knox's translation in order to enjoy it, and no adult can do that. It is only by studying the less familiar passages that one can appreciate the treat that awaits one's children, in the swift, lucid flow of the story.

Mgr. Knox rigorously and rightly eschews all the memorable phrases. It is sentimental to regret that the Dukes of Edom have lost their coronets and Eliseus' she-bears their sex. But once, I think, the master does nod. The death of Jezebel is one of the best remembered scenes in the Authorized Version, where her last words read: "Had Zimri peace who slew his master?"; Mgr.

Knox has: "Is all well? There was one Zambri that murdered his master," and it is by no means plain who is speaking, Jezabel or Jehu. Moreover there is a drab vagueness about the incident. What precisely does Mgr. Knox's Jezabel mean by "Is all well?", a phrase of which St. Jerome gives no suggestion? Is she in doubt about Jehu's disposition and attempting, Cleopatra-like, to come to terms? Zambri did not marry his master's widow. Surely she adorned herself for her death and taunted Jehu at the moment of his triumph. That certainly makes the better story.

As I say, we cannot come to this vintage with clean palates. It belongs to the young and it is pleasant to speculate on which phrases will take their fancy and pass into semi-jocular general use as have the phrases of 1611. My money is on the idiosyncratic, often repeated form: "Besiege me the city, he told them, *and besiege it they did.*" That seems to have the authentic appeal for popular adoption.

A MORE TECHNICAL VIEWPOINT

Sebastian Bullough

MONSIGNOR KNOX's translation of the Old Testament is one of the most enterprising undertakings that has appeared in the sphere of Old Testament studies for a long time. Just 340 years ago was published the first volume of the Douay Old Testament, which was followed after some months by its companion volume. The Douay divided their volumes after Job, while Mgr. Knox's volumes divide before Job. For over 300 years all English Catholic Bibles were dependent on the Douay or on one of its revisions, but Mgr. Knox's Old Testament, like his New, is an entirely independent work.

There are so many problems connected with Old Testament

translation that it is as well to be clear from the outset about the precise nature of the present work. In the first place it is not an officially "authorized" version, that is, it is not authorized for use in church. It was undertaken "at the request of the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster" (title-page) and is expressly stated to be "for private use only" (ib.). The translator writes in his preface: "The book gives my idea of how the Old Testament ought to be translated, and does not claim to do anything more." The very fact of the private nature of the enterprise has left the translator that freedom which he has used to such great advantage. His name, plainly printed on the title-page, is there to receive at once the very considerable glory and at the same time the very considerable responsibility. For there is a strongly personal touch all through, the mannerisms and turns of phrase that delight us as they recur, the recurrent and varied devices for coping with particular patterns of the original, the flavour whose archaism is so rarely lost, and at the same time that freshness of style which enables the modern reader to read easily and even eagerly.

This brings us to a second fundamental matter. Mgr. Knox has not used "biblical English," nor on the other hand has he used plain twentieth-century prose. Recently¹ he wrote: "When I embarked on the Old Testament, I thought I could treat it as I treated the New; aim at a sort of timeless English that would reproduce the idiom of our own day without its neologisms, and perhaps have something of an old-fashioned flavour about it. The further I got into the Old Testament, the more surely it was borne in on me that you could not (as they say) swing it. The New Testament was new, the Old Testament was old. . . . What is needed, if we are ever to have a first-class translation of the Old Testament, is a return to the past; to an earlier and more vigorous tradition of English." The language used in this translation preserves a special dignity through its archaism, while rarely remaining too archaic to be instantly intelligible. This dignity does indeed convey the atmosphere of the Hebrew diction, and when in dialogue the Hebrew relaxes, we usually find the translation also relaxes, introducing neologisms very rarely overdone. Some examples of the idiom might be given here, without concern for the moment about the exact relation

¹ *The Clergy Review*, October 1948, p. 228.

to the originals, but in order to sample the style of language used. First some plain narrative.

(II Kings¹ 6: 12-19). Then word was brought to David how the Lord had blessed Obbededom and all that was his for the ark's sake. So back he went, and brought the ark of God away from Obbededom's house, into David's Keep, with great rejoicing; seven choirs of dancers he took with him, and a young bull for a victim. No sooner had the bearers of the ark gone six paces on their journey, than he sacrificed the bull and a ram with it. As for himself, he went dancing with all his might, there in the Lord's presence; clad in the sacred mantle, he must dance too. So David, and Israel with him, brought back the ark that bears record of the Lord's covenant, with rejoicing and a great din of trumpets. And as it came into David's Keep, there was Michol, Saul's daughter, looking on from her window; she saw king David leaping and dancing in the Lord's presence, and her heart despised him. When the ark had been brought into the city, they put it down at the appointed place, in the midst of a tabernacle which David had there spread out for it; and David brought burnt sacrifices and welcome-offerings into the Lord's presence there.

An example of dialogue:

(Esther 5: 1-8). There sat the king on his throne, in the palace council chamber, facing the main door; he saw Esther, his queen, standing there without, and the sight of her won his heart. Out went the golden sceptre he bore, and as she drew near to kiss the tip of it, Why, Esther, said he, what is thy errand? Ask me for half my kingdom, and it is thine. My lord king, she answered, do me the honour of dining with me today; I have a feast prepared; and bring Aman with thee. The king, without more ado, had Aman summoned to wait, there and then, on Esther's pleasure; and both of them went to the feast she had prepared. Deep drank the king that day, and said to Esther, What wouldst thou? Tell me what thy desire is? Be it half my kingdom, it shall not be denied thee. What would I have? said she. I ask no more than this; since the king's grace is ready to humour my whim, to grant me what I ask, do me the favour to dine with me tomorrow, and Aman with thee; then I will make known to the royal ear what my request is.

Lastly in this connection, an example of eloquence:

(Deut. 4: 21-24, Moses preaching). What though I, through your fault, have incurred the Lord's anger, so that he has sworn never to let me cross Jordan, and see the fair land he means to give you? What though I must die here, still on Jordan's further bank? You will cross over it; that fair land will be yours. Never forget, then, the covenant the Lord thy God has made with thee; never fashion thyself those images the Lord has forbidden thee to fashion; the Lord thy God is a fire that burns all before it, loves thee with a jealous love.

A third important matter to be made clear at once is that the translation has been made from the Vulgate Latin, and this not only fulfils a special need for the Catholic reader whose Latin

¹ Mgr. Knox uses, of course, the Vulgate names of the books I-II-III-IV Kings, which correspond to I-II Samuel and I-II Kings of the Hebrew (and Anglican) Bible.

liturgy is in great part culled from the Bible, but it is also a blessing needing little disguise, since a Latin text is obviously not only more tractable and patient of translation, but sometimes yields a plain sense when the original Hebrew fails to do so. In his preface Mgr. Knox writes: "In a handful of passages where the Vulgate text yields no tolerable sense, or yields a sense which evidently quarrels with the context, I have rendered from the Hebrew, giving a literal translation of the Latin in a footnote. Where the Latin makes good sense, but is at variance with the Hebrew, I have indicated the fact of disagreement, but without giving the full Hebrew text if the difference is slight, or if the Hebrew text is itself unintelligible." The passages in this volume where the Vulgate reading has been abandoned are indeed few. There is the passage about the windows in the ark (Gen. 6: 16), "which thou wilt make a foot and a half in height," where the Hebrew is a little less obscure than the Latin. In Gen. 49: 3 "my manhood's first-fruits" abandons the Latin "*principium doloris mei*," without, however, a footnote. The phrase "the pale of the Philistines" (a good rendering of *gelilōth*) replaces the Vulgate's "Galilee of the Philistines." I Kings 13: 1 is skilfully corrected to "Saul was (so many) years old," with a footnote to the bracket explaining that a number is evidently lacking in the Hebrew, and that this led the Vulgate to indicate that he was one year old when he came to the throne. Similarly in II Par. 22: 2 the age of Ochozias as given in both the Hebrew and the Latin is corrected by the Septuagint and the parallel passage in IV Kings.

The fourth and last of these general points is that Mgr. Knox does not set out to produce what is usually called a literal translation. His most illustrious predecessor in the work of translating the Bible, St. Jerome, had already laid down that *sensum non verba* was a principle of translation (Ep. lxxiv), yet he himself in his Vulgate Latin Bible declined to use the principle and usually translated almost verbally. The same tradition of literal translation continued through the centuries, producing the phenomenon of "biblical English" which is to a great extent an importation into English of Hebrew usage and syntax. For our translations of, for instance, Homer, Virgil and the classics, we would never tolerate the literal style that we have accepted for so long in the case of the Bible. And why has it been so long accepted? Because we all feel that in the inspired Word of God

there is power in the very words themselves, and St. Jerome said that "the very order of the words is a *mysterium*" (Ep. lvii). For this reason (I think) a good literal translation—it must be good and not obsolete—will always hold a place of honour. But what if the *mysterium* be no longer intelligible except to the initiated or to the student? Here lies the importance of having a free translation into graceful idiom that is native to the land, and which will convey to the modern reader the *sensum* which the *verba* conveyed to the original audience so remote from ourselves in time, place and general background. Such a work in no way detracts from the value of a translation (such as the Westminster Version) which sets out to give to the reader acquainted with these things the mysterious *verba* of the Word of God as far as possible in their own idiom, and to which the faithful have the right to have access. Mgr. Knox's translation gives us the message of the Old Testament in an idiom whose native English grace, although sometimes appearing to differ widely from the words of the original (or of its literal Latin equivalent), yet has much kinship with the native grace of the Hebrew. The literal translation will have not English, but Hebrew grace, for those who understand it; Mgr. Knox's has English grace that all who read will understand.

An example here would not be amiss. The passage refers to the wicked King Amon of Juda, and is taken from IV Kings 21: 21–22. On the left is a literal translation from the Hebrew, which the Vulgate translates almost word for word.

Literal translation from Hebrew

And he walked in every path wherein his father had walked, and he worshipped the idols which his father had worshipped, and bowed down to them. And he forsook the Lord, the God of his fathers, and he walked not in the way of the Lord.

Mgr. Knox's translation

Never a path that his father had marked out but he must follow it, never a shameful cult his father had honoured but he must be its slave; but the Lord, the God his ancestors had worshipped, he forsook utterly, and followed his bidding never.

Here Mgr. Knox's English grace consists in the power of that dignified condemnation, while the strength of the Hebrew lies in its simple statement of fact.

Another example might be quoted, showing a more purely narrative style. Again the Latin follows the Hebrew literally.

From Genesis 28: 6-8:

Literal translation from Hebrew

And Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him to Mesopotamia to take for himself from there a wife. While he was blessing him, he had commanded him saying, Thou shalt not take a wife from the daughters of Chanaan. And Jacob listened to his father and his mother and went to Mesopotamia.

Mgr. Knox's translation

An ill day for Esau; here was Jacob sent with his father's blessing to find himself a wife in Syria; forbidden, as he would win that blessing, to marry a Chanaanite; here was Jacob gone all the way to Mesopotamia in obedience to his parents' whim!

Here again the simple Hebrew style is represented by a purely English narrative idiom.

Now turn we to a brief examination of Mgr. Knox's solution of more particular problems of Old Testament translation. It will only be possible in the present space to give a sample chosen at random of any particular problem, and then only of those problems which frequently recur. When a literal translation of the Hebrew only is given alongside it is to be assumed that the Latin Vulgate adheres closely to this.

The biggest problem in Old Testament translation from the point of view of idiom is that of *syntactical connection*, which in Hebrew is usually effected by the simple conjunction "and," and at bigger steps in the narrative by the phrase *wayehi* ("and it came to pass"). Mgr. Knox, as English usage requires, varies considerably the construction.

(Gen. 6: 1) *Hebrew*

And it came to pass that mankind began to multiply upon the face of the earth.

Latin

And when men had begun to multiply upon the earth.

Knox

Time passed, and the race of men began to spread over the face of the earth.

(Gen. 14: 1)

And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel . . .

And it came to pass at that time that Amraphel . . .

It chanced at this time that Amraphel . . .

(Jos. 1: 1) *Hebrew*

And it came to pass after the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, that the Lord spoke to Josue son of Nun, Moses' attendant, saying, Moses my servant is dead, and now arise, cross this Jordan. . . .

Knox

His servant Moses dead, the Lord gave a charge to Josue, son of Nun, that till now had waited on Moses' needs. Now that my servant Moses is dead, he told him, it is for thee to cross yonder stream of Jordan. . . .

A frequent device for avoiding a repetition of simple verbs with

"and" may be exemplified by the following grim passage about Jezabel.

(IV Kings 9: 33) *Hebrew*

And he said, Throw her down. And they threw her down.

Knox

Throw her down, said he, and throw her down they did.

Sometimes the Vulgate had already avoided the repetition by the use of a relative clause, as in this passage about the old prophet at Bethel.

(III Kings 13: 13) *Hebrew*

And he said to his sons, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled the ass and he mounted upon it.

Latin

Et ait filiis suis, Sternite mihi asinum. Qui cum stravissent, ascendit.

Knox

He bade them saddle the ass for him. Saddle it they did, and he mounted.

For larger steps in the narrative another device used (usually corresponding to "and" or to "after these things") is the phrase "Now turn we to . . .," used first in Judges 17: 1, and with particular effect in IV Kings 7: 3, I Esdr. 7: 1 and Tob. 3: 7.

Another special problem is that of *reporting speeches*. Hebrew most frequently uses direct speech, and several of the examples quoted above show instances of its replacement by *oratio obliqua*. Even when direct speech is translated as such, however, point is often given to a remark by the insertion of an initial "what" or "why," or a repetition.

(Ruth 1: 19) *Hebrew*

And all the city murmured about them, and the women said, is this Noemi?

Knox

The tale went round, and all the gossips were saying, Why, it is Noemi.

(Jos. 24: 19) *Hebrew*

And Josue said to the people, You cannot serve the Lord.

Knox

You? said Josue. You are not fit to serve the Lord.

A particular case, with a speech within a speech, calls for special treatment. The following is an example of many in the Pentateuch.

(Num. 33: 50-52) *Hebrew*

And the Lord spoke to Moses . . . saying, Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them, You are about to cross Jordan and you shall inherit the land . . . and you shall destroy . . .

Knox

And . . . the Lord spoke to Moses giving him a message for the Israelites, When you have crossed Jordan, and find yourselves in the land . . . you must destroy . . .

"One difficulty confronts you at the very outset: the whole Hebrew way of putting things is diffuse, whereas we, more and

more, grow accustomed to terseness." Thus wrote Mgr. Knox in an article we have already quoted¹; and his translation includes many examples of *ellipsis* where a diffuse Hebrew is turned into terse and vigorous English. A fine instance is in Aaron's cry to Moses after the people had attacked him with complaints and his sister had been punished with leprosy.

(Num. 12: 11) *Hebrew*

My lord, I entreat thee, do not lay
to our account the sin wherein we
have acted foolishly and sinned.

Knox

My lord, I entreat thee, do not hold
us to account for this mad rebellion of
ours.

In the same article Mgr. Knox wrote: "Even more leisurely is the progress of Numbers 7. Verses 12 to 89 describe the gifts made by the Israelites at the dedication of the Tabernacle; by verse 17 we have finished the inventory of Juda's contribution, a silver dish, a silver bowl, and so on—only to find that Issachar made precisely the same contribution, which is repeated in full, and so on all through the twelve tribes, up to Verse 89." But he left us at that time wondering what he was going to do about it. In fact in v. 12-17 (for Juda) he gives of course the full details with weights and so forth. In v. 18-23 he abbreviates to "dish and bowl and saucer, with the like contents" and similarly for the other offerings (for Issachar). After this he merely writes "dish and bowl and saucer." A similar technique is followed in the case of Deut. 27: 15-26, where twelve solemn curses are uttered against transgressors of the moral law, after each one of which the Hebrew adds "And all the people shall say, Amen." Mgr. Knox from the second to the eleventh curse merely adds the one word "Amen." After the twelfth he adds "and all will say, Amen."

The fact is that the Oriental loves repetitions and refrains (one thinks of the Far-East idiom of Chinese plays or of Kai-Lung) while the manner is not native to the West, although the West may sometimes be charmed by its curiousness. And here again we pause to ask ourselves whether we want the Hebrew Scripture to speak to us in its own idiom or in ours. Mgr. Knox is unhesitatingly writing for an English audience, to whom he is going to give what the Old Testament has to say without distracting them with its "curiousness." The representation of the Old Testament in its own idiom must be, and should be left to be the particular task of the "literal translator" in the manner

¹ Loc. cit., p. 224.

of St. Jerome himself. But let us remind ourselves that Mgr. Knox's stylistic skill, while using our own language, never leaves us with the impression that the things happened yesterday (as the new American translation of Genesis tends to do), but on the contrary conveys to us a definite atmosphere of a remote age and a remote land.

This brings us to the question of *neologisms* or modern turns of phrase. There are not many that cause the reader astonishment, since most of them correspond to an equally colloquial Hebrew, such as "Let me fetch a drop of water" in Genesis 18: 4, or the delightful remark after Semei's *lèse-majesté* in II Kings 16: 9.

Hebrew

Why shall this dead dog curse my lord the king?

Knox

Why must this hangdog fellow be allowed to curse my lord the king?

Semei had been calling King David a "man of Belial" for which Mgr. Knox's translation "upstart" is of course etymologically very sound (16: 7). One might take leave to question the phrase "while I have my say" in Deut. 32: 1, where the Hebrew "and I will speak" is highly dignified. In Esther 5: 9 Aman's brief triumph makes him *tōv lēv*, which is amusing—the Vulgate's "alacer" is not—but perhaps "treading on air" is too amusing? The account of Samson's first amorous exploit opens with a very ordinary phrase in Hebrew (and Latin), yet one stops at Mgr. Knox's rendering.

(Judges 14: 1) *Hebrew*

And Samson went down to Thamnatha, and saw a woman . . .

Knox

Samson paid a visit to Thamnatha, and there was a woman there . . . that took his eye.

There are one or two great phrases which long use has canonized in their own strong idiom and which may be considered to have become tame in their new form. There is for instance the answer of the boy Samuel.

(I Kings 3: 9) *Hebrew*

Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.

Knox

Speak on, Lord; thy servant is listening.

The phrase "God save the king" (of the Douay and the Authorized) has on the other hand very rightly been rendered according to the Hebrew and Latin as "Long live the king!" (I Kings 10: 24, IV Kings 11: 12, II Par. 23: 11—in II Kings

16: 16 however, where it is a personal salutation, "Greeting to the king!").

Occasionally (rarely enough in these books of the Old Testament) it is the translator's task to be also an interpreter. In most cases Mgr. Knox supplies an excellent footnote to explain. There is, for instance, the problem of the nature of the idol in Judges 17: 4 (interpreted as a carved image with a sheath of metal), and the complicated business of the trumpet blasts in Num. 10: 1-7, with the distinction of *tāqa'* and *hērīa'* in trumpeting, which is interpreted (I think originally) of a "blast on one note" as opposed to a "wailing rise or fall"—but there is no helping footnote here. More important than these is the passage in Exodus 3: 14, explaining the Holy Name of God, where the translation interprets as it goes along.

<i>Hebrew</i>	<i>Latin</i>	<i>Knox</i>
When they say to me, What is his name? what shall I say to them? And God said to Moses, I AM WHO AM. And he said, Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, "I AM" sent me to you.	If they say to me, What is his name? what shall I say to them? God said to Moses, I AM WHO AM. He said, Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, (HE) WHO IS sent me to you.	If . . . they ask me, What is his name? what answer shall I make? And God said to Moses, I am the God who IS; thou shalt tell the Israel- ites, THE GOD WHO IS has sent me to you.

There is an all too brief footnote to this passage, and the Holy Name is given as Javé, which is a Continental and not too accurate form, which reappears in the note on 6: 3 with the remark that the word Adonai was sometimes substituted (when in fact this was nearly always done). The form Javé appears in the text at 15: 3, when Adonai might have done as in 6: 3, or else the more usual English form Yahweh (if the Holy Name should appear in the text at all).

Proper names follow the Vulgate or Douay forms throughout, including Challoner's alterations of "Solomon" and "Jonathan," to which is added "Lebanon." This is explained in the preface. In IV Kings 24 we find Nabuchadonosor, but not elsewhere—perhaps a misprint? In connection with proper names we should notice an extremely ingenious device for translating texts which purport to give the derivation of a name: for instance Gen. 29: 32 "So she conceived and bore a son, whom she called Ruben, as if she would say, the Lord had looked on my lowliness, Raa-

Beani"—transliterating the Hebrew of the preceding phrase (though in this case it is inaccurately transliterated). Another similar device is to give the meaning of the name, as in Genesis 30: 12 "Lia said, Here is a blessing for me . . . so she gave him the name of Aser, Blessedness."

In the whole of this volume I have only found one place where the translation seems to me to be simply wrong, i.e. where it goes contrary to the evident sense of the original. And this is a minute point. David was fleeing from Absalom's rebellion and left the city (II Kings 15: 30)¹, "bare-foot he went and bare-headed," while according to the Hebrew (and Latin) he had his head covered, as a sign of mourning (as did also "the throng that were in his company"). It is conceivable that it is deliberate concession to the Western practice of going bare-headed on mournful occasions. But on the other hand, it may be a solitary slip in the course of 739 pages.

Three little points in conclusion. How glad one is to find cubits translated into feet ($1\frac{1}{2}$ to a cubit) in the measurements of Noe's ark in Gen 6: 15-16! One is then correspondingly disappointed to find that it never happens again: Goliath standing 9 ft. 6 ins. would have been much more impressive than "six cubits and a span" (I Kings 17: 4). Secondly, Challoner's "Cherubims" are bad grammar (the Douay had "Cherubins"), and Mgr. Knox begins (Genesis 3: 24) with "Cherubim," but then occasionally writes "cherubs" (e.g. Exodus 25: 18, II Par. 3: 10). Once the cherubim of the ark furniture are given a capital (I Kings 4: 4). Lastly, let us thank Mgr. Knox for the care and patience he bestowed on those vast genealogical lists and clergy directories so beloved of the author of Paralipomena (he uses the nominative form instead of the usual genitive plural in—*ōn*). Not many people will read them, but he has taken much care over the phrases that link the names, he has taken the trouble to introduce the word "confrater" for Asaph to show that he was not a real brother but only a colleague (e.g. I Par. 6: 39), he has inserted a few dots where a name has apparently been missed out, and—crowning glory of scholarly care—he has put Moholi in I Par. 6: 47 into brackets, because of course he was the brother and not the son of Musi.

¹ There is a typographical muddle about the verse numbers from v. 27 to the end of this chapter (v. 37).

REVIEWS

THE CANON OF 'SCRUTINY'

The Importance of Scrutiny. Edited by Eric Bentley. (George W. Stewart, Inc., New York. \$5.75.)

MR. BENTLEY'S purpose in editing this selection was to bring to the notice of the American public interested in what has been called the "New Criticism," the work that has appeared in the first sixteen years of publication of the critical quarterly *Scrutiny*, and in particular the work of F. R. Leavis, one of its editors and chief contributors. For *Scrutiny*, as he says, "has not yet been granted a fair hearing," and its importance is such that an effort should be made to get for it that "fair hearing." Whatever the extent of one's agreement or disagreement with the criticism represented by *Scrutiny*, one can agree that in England no less than in America, its work is insufficiently known, and that this volume deserves a welcome in that it may do something to counteract this ignorance. The nature of the controversy provoked by *Scrutiny* is such that Mr. Bentley has thought it wise to point out that he is entirely disinterested, never having met Dr. Leavis or contributed to *Scrutiny*. I ought, perhaps, as a preliminary to this review, to point out that I am equally disinterested, having no connection with *Scrutiny*, Dr. Leavis, or Mr. Bentley.

He begins the Introduction to his selection with a brief history of the "New Criticism," which he sees as having its origin with Rémy de Gourmont, being furthered (and later abandoned) by such distinguished writers as T. S. Eliot, Middleton Murry, and I. A. Richards, and being taken up and established on a permanent footing by Dr. Leavis and *Scrutiny*. Dr. Leavis's special virtue, in Mr. Bentley's eyes, is that he has stuck to criticism, that he has cultivated that particular garden assiduously, while some of his more famous predecessors have abandoned it for vain, muddled attempts "to save the world." While perhaps feeling that the suggestion of a sneer in Mr. Bentley's reference to attempts "to save the world" may be both unfair and unnecessary (his remark merely means that he is not very interested in the present activities of Messrs. Murry and Richards), one can agree that criticism needs a devoted specialist, and that that is what Dr. Leavis has been for many years.

Mr. Bentley goes on to a restatement (for the audience he has in mind, unfamiliar with *Scrutiny*, it may, of course, be a first statement), of the reasons for thinking literature, as distinct from philosophy, important, and the valid criticism of literature as therefore an essential. Here, though he contributes little that is new, he gives a fairly clear

account of some of the assumptions on which the work of *Scrutiny* has been based. He distinguishes between those who think literature merely an aid to religion or philosophy, or an amusement for a casual hour, and those who believe that it is important in itself, and that the writer has a social function—"to stand guard over the language." Finally he points out that *Scrutiny*, for all its apparent dogmatism and arrogance, has never been "stupidly partisan," or merely fashionable, and that its judgments have frequently been justified by the event. All this is briefly expounded, and will serve as a useful guide to the uninitiated reader.

The selection has been divided into five groups. The first consists of editorials, exchanges between Dr. Leavis and others, in which the position of literary critic as distinct from literary historian or philosopher is elucidated, and an article by Q. D. Leavis on a "man of letters" who is the antithesis of the *Scrutiny* ideal. All this serves to define the position of *Scrutiny*, and makes clear its differences, in aims and methods, from its contemporaries. The second section consists of three Leavis articles on "Great Critics" (Arnold, Coleridge, and Johnson), and the third of a number of contributions on three Great Poets (Shakespeare, Coleridge and somewhat surprisingly, Dickens!). Section four comprises four essays on "versions of drama," and section five, a "Modern Miscellany", consists mainly of reviews, and covers, among others, T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, E. M. Forster (a full scale essay), I. A. Richards (an essay and a long review), and D. H. Lawrence.

In discussing this selection one should bear in mind the original *Scrutiny* manifesto, in which the editors described the kind of work they would publish. They said they would print "critical articles on literature and the arts," similar articles on "various significant aspects of contemporary life," including "surveys" of various "departments of modern life" based on material provided by readers, reviews of "carefully selected books," and some original work. They emphasized that there would be diversity of outlook, and that "articles of intrinsic importance" would be published whether the editors entirely agreed with them or not. These are pre-eminently the objectives which, difficult of attainment though they may be, one would desire a critical quarterly to set itself. *Scrutiny* is important in so far as it has achieved these objectives, and I believe that at various times it has published excellent work under all these heads (with a pardonable exception in the matter of original work). Mr. Bentley justifies his title, *The Importance of Scrutiny*, in so far as he has published material which represents the best that the periodical has published under these three main heads.

I believe that his choice is open to criticism, even when full allowance

has been made for his desire not to reprint work already easily available in book form, or soon to be made available. This is a reasonable guiding principle, but if we are to have a volume clearly revealing *The Importance of Scrutiny*, it must not be too rigidly adhered to. In fact Mr. Bentley does abandon it in reprinting L. C. Knight's *Notes on Comedy*, and it might have been abandoned more frequently.

The "critical articles on literature" which have appeared in *Scrutiny* are well represented, but even here the choice is open to question. There are essays on Coleridge both as poet and critic, which suggests a preoccupation with Coleridge which is not characteristic of *Scrutiny*. Again, why two essays on *Measure for Measure*, even though they originally appeared together? There are, after all, a number of other plays about which interesting articles have appeared (e.g. Tinkler's essays on *The Winter's Tale* and *Cymbeline*, Traversi's on *Coriolanus*, Leavis's on *Othello*). Representative essays on novelists are omitted, except for Leavis on E. M. Forster. I should like to have seen Boris Ford's essay on *Wuthering Heights*, or F. Chapman's on Hardy. Space could have been found for more than these I have suggested by omission of section four, of which only Knight's essay on *Comedy* deserves a place.

All this may, of course, be simply a matter of my choice compared with Mr. Bentley's, and in such matters opinions will necessarily vary. But a more serious defect of the whole selection is that those essays in *Scrutiny* on "significant aspects of contemporary life" are not represented at all, although some of them are clearly among the best things that have appeared. If such things as the "scrutinies" of Examinations and Training Colleges would not be readily understood by American audiences, there are still many articles which deserve a place as representative of *Scrutiny's* work in this field—Butterfield on *History and the Marxian Method*, Harding on *The Cultural Background of Intelligence Testing*, or Mason on *Education by Book Club?* to name only a few.

In his selection of reviews Mr. Bentley has done well to avoid many of the shorter ones, which inevitably appear scrappy, and to concentrate on those which have developed into short essays. He might have omitted the shorter pieces on Eliot, Hulme, and de Gourmont, but the reviews of Joyce, Richards and D. H. Lawrence are of the best of their kind. None of the original work that has appeared in *Scrutiny* has been reprinted, but there is no cause to regret the omission. The editors themselves in 1932 did not seem very sanguine about this part of their undertaking, and events have justified their very reasonable pessimism.

The differences of opinion between Mr. Bentley and myself as to what constitutes the best of *Scrutiny* cannot, in my view, be attributed solely to personal preference. His fundamental weakness is that he

shows no consciousness of the difference of quality between the *Scrutiny* of the present date and of the middle thirties. To my mind there has been a narrowing down of range and diversity, a decline in liveliness, noticeable since about 1942. The war may have been responsible for this originally, but there has been little sign in the years since the war of any renewal of scope or vigour. Had Mr. Bentley been aware of this, I feel it would have impelled him to include some of those articles on events of topical significance which contributed so much to the liveliness of the earlier volumes.

Scrutiny, then, has done admirable work, but is in need of a blood transfusion to restore it to the vigour of its youth. All will agree that such rejuvenation is eminently desirable. Let us hope that Mr. Bentley's selection, whatever its imperfections, may do something, by increasing the informed and interested public for *Scrutiny*, to bring about that desirable end.

BERNARD J. NOLAN.

NATURALISM IN SHAKESPEARE

Character and Motive in Shakespeare. By J. I. M. Stewart. (Longmans. 10s. 6d.)

THE main contention running through Mr. Stewart's essays can be briefly stated, and is true and important: poetic drama can afford access to levels of psychological reality which naturalistic drama cannot reach. Therefore when Shakespeare's characters do not behave in a way which is naturalistically plausible, the proper thing for the critic to do is not to explain the phenomenon in terms of primitive or conventionalized techniques, but to penetrate to "that mysterious world, beyond common consciousness, in which the artist's creations live" (p. 66). Moreover what is psychologically natural, as Mr. Stewart points out (pp. 69-71), is not a constant but varies from one culture to another: it is not absurd to say (Mr. Stewart does not quite put it thus) that it is life, in a society of any degree of sophistication, that is conventionalized and art that is (or can be) more fundamentally natural.

This approach to the plays is illustrated through a consideration of "historical" or "realistic" criticism, as exemplified principally in Bridges, Schücking and Stoll. In the main the book, rather reminiscent in its construction of Waldock's *Paradise Lost and its Critics*, avoids being overwhelmed by the summary of, and commentary on, other critics' views of which it largely consists, but it does run that danger. Schücking and Stoll, in particular, get rather more attention than they deserve. Mr. Stewart talks of Schücking as "pioneering territory which

many subsequent critics have abundantly colonized" (p. 40), but in fact his work and that of Stoll has been remarkably sterile, as far as criticism is concerned. Both of them must now be over seventy, and they have not, as far as I know, produced any disciples worth consideration as critics. Mr. Stewart is, I suspect, thinking of the large body of "background" literature: world-picture, Elizabethan psychology, demonology, rhetoric, etc. etc., of which we have had so much in the last twenty-five years, but Schücking and Stoll alone have seriously tried to practise historical *criticism*, and where subsequent scholars have profited by their work, it has been by virtually writing off their claims to be critics at all, and either deliberately devoting their own efforts to studies ancillary to criticism or else making use of such studies in the full consciousness that they are not criticism. Mr. Stewart goes as far as any candid critic can in describing Schücking's *Character Problems* as "a book to be justly esteemed on account of the many pioneer observations on pre-Shakespearian dramatic convention that it makes" (p. 78). I confess that, for me, both it and Stoll's *Shakespeare Studies* fall very decidedly into the class of books that one *has* read, not of those that one *reads*. And Mr. Stewart has not tempted me to refresh my memories. I think he could with advantage have made his points about the inadequacies of Schücking and Stoll more economically, and then have devoted more space to developing agreements and disagreements with critics like Wilson Knight, who are trying to do the same sort of thing as he is. His criticism is in essence common-sense, middle-of-the-road, eclectic—I mean all those as terms of praise—and it is a pity for a good critic to look more combative than he is.

As a specimen of Mr. Stewart's method at its best, I would cite the treatment of *Othello*, a beautiful piece of analysis of contrastingly inadequate interpretations, followed by a positive account embodying a genuinely original and convincing perception. A little less notable is the discussion of Falstaff. The link-up with anthropology—"Hal, by a displacement common enough in the evolution of ritual, kills Falstaff instead of killing the king" (p. 138)—though not manifestly wrong, borders on the irrelevantly ingenious; if criticism is to call on allied disciplines, there is more illumination in the Freudian treatment, cited on p. 144, of the rejection of Falstaff as "the conquest of the *id*." This affords an occasion for saying that Mr. Stewart throughout uses Freud judiciously, and sometimes (as in the pages, 30-37, on Leontes) with startling aptness. To sum up: not an epoch-making book, but a sensible and cultivated one.

J. C. MAXWELL.

A GAY AND VIGOROUS DISSERTATION

Barbara Celarent. By Thomas Gilby, O.P. (Longmans. 18s.)

THE purpose of Fr. Gilby's book is, in his own words, to provide "a description of a habit of mind and method." The habit of mind is that which informs the scholastic philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, the method, that of the scholastic logic and dialectic in which it finds expression. The distinction, as Fr. Gilby rightly points out, is important, for while logic is concerned with pure form—the forms of argument—"the latter," dialectic, "mingles with the variety and sensibility of existing nature." Here, in fact, was St. Thomas's problem, the starting-point, as it were, of his philosophizing, the problem of how a rational spirit can, in Fr. Gilby's words, "cast about and accumulate knowledge about a world not wholly reducible to severely logical structures."

St. Thomas's feet were planted very firmly on the ground. For him, the dismissal of the accidents, contingencies and multiplicities of the familiar world as in some sense unreal, in favour of a world of static perfection and form conceived on Platonic lines for which alone the concept of reality is reserved, was a form of intellectual escapism; it was too easy an option. His predilections are those of common sense—it is not too much to say that his purpose was to discover good philosophical reasons for believing in the real existence of the kind of world that the common-sense man believes himself to perceive. Hence, his dominating concern was to explain, interpret and reduce to order the manifold variety of the world of sense, without explaining it away. As Fr. Gilby puts it, summarizing what he takes to be the intention of St. Thomas's philosophy: "There are no untouchables in the hierarchy of being. Plain yet recondite, all things to all men, philosophy should be ambitious to explore doubt with the sceptic, penetrate to multiplicity with the monist, establish duty with the hedonist, and exceed a materialist in earthiness." I let the quotation stand without comment; I shall return in a moment to the *manner* of Fr. Gilby's writing.

St. Thomas's problem is, then, how the categories of logical form may be applied to a world of changing and illogical matter. It is this problem, as it arises in connection with the traditional subjects of philosophical discourse, that Fr. Gilby seeks to elucidate throughout his exposition. It recurs, for example, in different forms in his chapters on the distinctions between the correct and the true, between the formal and the material, between necessity and fact, on the concept of fictitious being and on the notions of signs and symbols.

The great virtue of St. Thomas's philosophical writing is the sense that he gives one of being committed absolutely to reason, of following, whatever the conclusions reached, wherever reason may lead with

absolute faithfulness and complete integrity. You feel that you can trust yourself to his guidance through the mazes of speculative thought with happy confidence. There will be no deception for there is nothing whatever up St. Thomas's intellectual sleeve.

This comes out very clearly in St. Thomas's use of dialectic. The first principles of reasoning cannot, as Fr. Gilby clearly points out, be established by reasoning—"logic cannot justify itself but must borrow the forces of its fundamental assumptions from elsewhere." Whence, then, are they obtained? In the last resort they are revealed to a faculty of intellectual inspection. The first principles of reasoning are, in fact, seen to be self-evident by the intuition of a trained mind. But the fact that in the last resort they are undemonstrable by reason does not mean that reason can lend them no support. St. Thomas's method of support is dialectical. What he does is to assume that the first principles are denied, to examine the consequences of their denial, and to see whether these do not include some one consequence which the denier agrees to be obviously false. If this can be done—and St. Thomas is constantly doing it—the effect is by implication indirectly to establish the principle. Thus, in the *Summa* St. Thomas usually begins his consideration of a doctrine by rehearsing and then considering the conclusions which would follow from all the arguments against it that he can think of.

In St. Thomas's hands this method produces the kind of intellectual satisfaction which is not wholly dissimilar from one's aesthetic delight in a work of art. And yet it cannot be denied that his resolute determination to follow reason wherever it may lead, combined with his insistence upon retaining the world of common sense—for is it not, after all, irrational to reject it?—leads him to adopt certain positions, for example, in his account of perception which one finds it almost impossible to accept. In what, I am afraid, I found a confused and confusing description Fr. Gilby guides us through the multiplicity of entities that encumber St. Thomas's theory, explaining to us the distinction between "an event in space and time and its lasting and universal meaning"; between "a natural sign that is sensible and one that is intelligible"; between the image, the *species sensibilis*, which is the impression on a mind of a phenomenon (itself, by the way, differentiated from the image in the mind) and the intellectual idea. It is, I repeat, a confusing account which most philosophers have refused to regard as constituting an improvement on Aristotle's theory of perception from which it plainly derives.

Fr. Gilby's exposition does not improve it and in general I found Fr. Gilby's manner of exposition unhelpful. In his Introduction he tells us that he has aimed at producing a work of philosophy which conforms to Dr. Johnson's description of "a gay and vigorous disserta-

tion"—"easier reading," Fr. Gilby continues, "than the treatises on economics and psychology which the week-end student is offered."

Gaiety is wooed by a multiplicity of metaphors and an arch allusiveness which produces an effect of irritation in the reader by making him feel an ignorant fool every time an allusion is lost on him.

The writing is often inexact. Take, for example, the following which is typical of Fr. Gilby's style: "Unreason is more cruel than hate, for then law itself becomes the dictate of desire acting according to opportunity, not the measure of encouragement and restraint according to meaning." I am not sure what this means, but am left wondering how a law can be "the measure of encouragement."

So far as the matter of the exposition is concerned, some of the conclusions do not seem to me to follow from the premises. Thus, in his chapter, *Sophisms and Dialectic*, Fr. Gilby tells us quite correctly that, for St. Thomas, "reality rounded off in this world is not found as a pure kind of meaning; everything is embodied and individualized by matter, sprigged out [*sic*], and enlivened by all manner of considerations." From this he proceeds to deduce among other conclusions, that "spirit is not contaminated by the body." Perhaps; perhaps not, but surely the fact, if it is a fact, does not follow from what has been said.

A gallant attempt, then, bravely undertaken to introduce St. Thomas to the twentieth-century lay reader. But not, I fear, very successful.

C. E. M. JOAD.

THE PRIVATE LIFE OF HENRY VIII

The Love Letters of Henry VIII. Edited with an introduction and comments by Henry Savage. (Allan Wingate. 9s.)

HERE is a sumptuously produced book containing eighteen facsimiles of manuscripts, the text of Henry's well known and utterly uninteresting letters to Anne Boleyn (together with a few others), and a hitherto unknown and even more uninteresting commentary. Will the general reader, that much-abused character, pay 9s. for all this? Perhaps. But he should be warned that he will not get his money's worth.

The blurb describes Henry's letters as fascinating. Here is a typical extract: "To put you even more often in mind of me, I send by this messenger a buck, killed very late yesterday evening by my own hand; hoping that when you eat it, it will remind you of the hunter; and so for lack of space I will make an end of my letter" (p. 41). To enliven the proceedings the editor throws in such illuminating remarks

as these: "In trying clearly to see the woman behind it, we may well reflect upon her relationship to that fascinating, though perhaps unanswerable, problem, the composition of love in general" (p. 17). "Male adoration, though it may be despised by the feminine head, is not altogether unacceptable to the feminine heart" (p. 65). And the following is another good example of his felicity in finding the wrong word: "When, on 29 January 1536, Anne gave birth to a dead male child, a bell may have tolled in her heart" (p. 25). Mr. Savage also gives us "psychological" portraits of Henry's wives. Some are dully salacious, and in Katharine of Aragon he is able to discern evidence of her Jesuit training (she died four years before the foundation of the Society of Jesus).

Enough of this. "Many books," we are told by the editor, "will yet be written about Anne Boleyn." We must hope that Mr. Savage will not be moved to give us *Forever Anne*.

W. SCHENK.

MONSIEUR JEAN-BAPTISTE

De La Salle: A Pioneer of Modern Education. By W. J. Battersby. (Longmans. 12s. 6d.)

ONE of the unfortunate consequences of the Reformation in this country is the prevailing ignorance of the work of Catholic pioneers in the field of social service since the sixteenth century. The recent success of a French film brought home to us not only the beauty and importance of the life of St. Vincent de Paul, but the disturbing recognition that we ought to have known something about such a man before. Similarly, Dr. Battersby's study of the life and work of Jean-Baptiste De La Salle makes us wonder how many teachers and educational administrators, other than Roman Catholics, are aware of his significance or indeed of his story at all.

De La Salle was born in 1651 of a noble family in Rheims, where he became a priest and a canon of the Cathedral. He could have had a distinguished career in the Church, but instead he chose to devote his life to providing education for the children of the poor. To this end he founded a religious order of teachers to which he gave the name "Brothers of the Christian Schools." The work of the movement was maintained and extended amid hardships and misunderstandings, and by 1719, the year of his death, the Brothers had schools in twenty-two towns in France and had extended their work to Rome. After his death his work spread all over the world. At the present day the

Brothers of the Christian Schools number some 18,000 and constitute "perhaps the greatest educational organization in the world."

The story is an impressive one. Some of the devices which grew into De La Salle's system have become so accepted a part of our educational practice that we are apt to forget that they were once innovations which took great courage to sustain. Such were the application of the "simultaneous method"; his introduction of writing as a regular subject in the ordinary school curriculum; his adoption of the vernacular instead of Latin, his introduction of meals at school. In the foundation of free schools for the poor, in his experiment with a boarding school for secondary education and in the establishment of the earliest reformatory schools there were greater contributions still.

The greatest contribution of all to the development of education was his emphasis on the training of teachers. His reading of the need and his provision for his students was so precise and exacting that only the infectious fervour of his vision and example can have brought his brethren through the austere and rigorous life he had to offer them and which he required. They were not to think of ordination as priests for fear they should be distracted from their primary vocation; and they were not even to learn Latin themselves, lest they should be tempted to drift from the education of the poor to that of the rich. Of all this and much else we can read in the classic treatises, notably *The Conduct of Schools* and *The Rules of Christian Behaviour*, in which his ideas were set forth.

Dr. Battersby's aim is a study of De La Salle the educator. His book is documented and systematic, and the story of De La Salle's privations, struggles and achievements shines through a rather ponderous biographical apparatus and a stolid style. Behind the educator stands the saint, and the saintliness has a more moving and abiding significance than all the educational achievements, great though these have been. Consider the way in which at the outset of his career he disposed of his private fortune: he was always to be in need of funds and he might have used it to buy premises or equipment or for the maintenance of his teachers and scholars. Instead he gave it away in bread to the poor; if the Brothers were to live in poverty he would not begin otherwise. It is of this great man and his spiritual side that we would hear more. We are indebted to Dr. Battersby for making possible this desire.

R. W. MOORE.

REASON AND RELIGION

The Christian in Philosophy. By J. V. Langmead Casserley. (Faber. 18s.)

Kierkegaard's Philosophy of Religion. By Reidar Thomte. (Princeton University Press: London, Geoffrey Cumberlege. \$3.50.)

I HAVE read *The Christian in Philosophy* with interest and admiration: I consider it an extremely good book. It is well composed, clearly written, penetrating in its criticisms and constructive in its positive thesis. There is, it is true, a certain amount of repetition; but perhaps this is all to the good. The book consists of two parts. The first part, on "the past record of the Christian in philosophy," is a masterly sketch in four chapters of the development of philosophy from Greece to the present day, written from the point of view indicated by the title: I do not recollect having ever read anything of the kind quite so good. A reader who already possesses some knowledge of the history of European philosophy will appreciate the author's ability, not only to synthesize a vast material in a comparatively small space, but also to throw a very clear light on general connections and lines of development, on the original meeting of Christianity with Greek philosophy, on the growth of Christian philosophy, and on the relevance of contemporary philosophical movements to Christian thought.

In the course of the first part of his book Mr. Langmead Casserley makes clear his predilection for the Augustinian conception of philosophy and its relation to the Christian faith. In the second part, on "the present opportunity of the Christian in philosophy," he develops this point of view. His conviction concerning the priority of faith may be illustrated by the following assertion: "The truth is that the Christian thinker is guided and influenced by his faith even when he thinks himself, and really is, most rigorously rational." The Christian mind has two distinct movements or spheres of interest. The first movement is towards the understanding of Christianity itself; and this movement produces the theologian and theology. The second movement is towards the interpretation, assessment and valuation of nature and of aesthetic, moral and social facts "in terms of analogies drawn from the experience of Christian personality in Christian history"; and this movement produces the Christian philosopher and Christian philosophy. "The Christian philosopher says, in effect, to his fellow man: 'If you really want to see life steadily and whole, come and look at it from here.'" The method of the Christian philosopher is thus "hypothetical," in the sense that he reveals the superiority of Christian personalist metaphysics to all other metaphysics by showing that the former has the greater explanatory power in regard to the problems

raised by man's experience of nature and by his moral, aesthetic and social experience and that it also provides the greater stimulus to further advance in and deepening of thought. The method of the Christian philosopher is also "analogical," in the sense that he believes that the fundamental categories of thought which are employed in historical and existential thinking (reason and purpose, freedom, will and love) and which are revealed most clearly in biblical history and biblical religion, must also be the fundamental categories of metaphysical thought.

In face of the objection that in this case we have "Christian philosophy" on the one hand and "pure philosophy" on the other, the author answers that there is no such thing as "pure philosophy". In his view, all metaphysical thinking is analogical; and the difference between the so-called "pure philosophers" and the Christian philosophers is that the former take their analogies from mathematics or from physical or biological science, as the case may be, whereas the latter take their analogies from the realm of self-conscious personality as revealed in history. In his emphasis on history the author is influenced by St. Augustine, Vico and the late R. G. Collingwood, though he rejects the latter's relativism. And one of his objections against "neo-scholasticism" is that it is "pre-historic," this term not being used as an abusive epithet but to express his conviction that scholastic philosophy antedates the rise of historical science and that it pays insufficient attention to history. Whether this last contention is true or false, I certainly know of some Thomists who would agree, in large part at least, with the author's position in regard to this matter.

Believing in the "analogical" and "hypothetical" character of metaphysical thinking, Mr. Langmead Casserley rejects the idea of metaphysics as a "demonstrative science." He says, for example, that "proof or demonstration is a process which classical metaphysics took over from mathematics with deplorable results." This is undeniably true in regard to certain metaphysical systems; but is it necessary to interpret "demonstration" or "proof" as necessarily meaning demonstration or proof of the mathematical type? God is singular and undefinable, and the singular, says the author, cannot be demonstrated. Well, it all depends what is meant by "demonstrated." I see no *a priori* reason why the existence of the singular or unique should not be "proved," even though it cannot be mathematically demonstrated. Speaking of the cosmological argument, the author says that nobody would propound it unless he already believed in God. "He is taking over the idea of God, as he has discovered it in religious life and belief, and using it to help him think his way through the ultimate problems which confront us when we endeavour to interpret the reality of nature. . . . So conceived, the cosmological argument con-

tends that we cannot make sense of the objectivity and endless creativity of nature without the idea of an eternal Creator. . . ." It would seem to me that if the argument *successfully* contends that we cannot make sense of nature without the idea of God it constitutes a "proof," without regard to the previous belief or unbelief of the arguer. It is true, however, that nobody would propound the argument unless he believed that nature is "intelligible" in a metaphysical sense; and this belief does perhaps seem to imply an implicit awareness of God. But in this fact, if it is a fact, is contained the answer to those who maintain that the argument involves a "leap" from the phenomenal to the metaphenomenal level. It is also true that the argument will convince no one who is unprepared to admit that the business of "making sense of nature" is a meaningful occupation.

Mr. Langmead Casserley's view of Christian philosophy as based on the employment of analogies taken from history or the realm of self-conscious personality, especially biblical history, leads him to regard Thomism as predominantly "apologetic" in character, in the sense that it adapts itself to the contemporary mentality which is more ready to listen to arguments based on the experience of external nature than on Augustinian experience. If Thomism is regarded in this light, he recognizes its value. It shows the intellectual fruitfulness and illuminative power of theism in the field of cosmological inquiry and interpretation. "Hence the popularity and real effectiveness of the revived Thomism of to-day. I have called St. Thomas the apologist *par excellence* among Christian philosophers. . . ." From the apologetic point of view it is essential to find some common ground with one's opponent; and, if one can prescind from any presuppositions save those made by one's opponent and yet show that he is wrong, so much the better. For my part, I am inclined to think, though I do not feel very certain about it, that the approach to metaphysics through cosmological inquiry is the natural philosophical approach, but that the author's approach is perhaps more "apologetically" useful in present circumstances. In any case the author's point of view certainly merits very serious discussion.

In view of the influence of Barthian theology on the one hand and of logical positivism (so far as this country is concerned) on the other, I must draw attention to the following point made by the author. Certain Christian thinkers, following in the wake of Kierkegaard's attack on Hegel, have practically welcomed the undermining of metaphysics which follows from the critical philosophy's treatment of the speculative reason. Just as Kierkegaard thought that Hegel was a dangerous alternative to true Christianity, so some of his disciples regard metaphysics in general as constituting an insidious rival to biblical theology. In contemporary philosophy, however, the attack

on metaphysics takes the form of a criticism of speech rather than of a criticism of the speculative reason; and this should make the impossibility of an alliance between Christian thinkers and anti-metaphysicians clear to everybody, even to the Barthians. "If it is indeed true that all human discourse about alleged transcendent realities is meaningless, then the Bible itself is no more significant than Hegel or St. Thomas Aquinas." As to logical positivism itself, the author argues, not only that speech must follow on and develop with experience, even if this means "stretching and straining the powers of speech to the utmost," but also that the people best qualified for discussing the semantic problem are those whose activities give rise to the problem. This last observation is a shrewd thrust against the logical positivists, whose "doctrine of meaning is demonstrably false" and whose "restriction of verification to physical observation (is) quite arbitrary, as well as highly metaphysical."

There are, I think, one or two mistakes. St. Thomas did not say (p. 76) that we know the fact of creation only through revelation: what he said was that we know the fact of creation "in time" only through revelation. Again, Heidegger has protested against being called an "atheist" (p. 156): he asserts that his philosophy is misunderstood if it is interpreted as specifically atheist in character. There are a few misprints, most of which consist in the omission of some letter in a word. But *das mann* (p. 157) is a curious hybrid, being neither *das Man* ("the one"), which it should be, nor *der Mann*.

To turn now to Mr. Thomte's book on Kierkegaard's philosophy of religion. In Kierkegaard we certainly have a Christian; but in what sense have we a philosopher? Well, nobody can seriously attack philosophy without philosophizing, of course; but Kierkegaard is also entitled to the name of philosopher in virtue of his description and analysis of the possible life-attitudes which he called the aesthetic, ethical and religious "stages." Mr. Thomte introduces his reader to these stages, an understanding of which is essential for the study of Kierkegaard. In part, of course, the latter's account of the stages was autobiographical in character, constituting a universalization of his own experience; but from the philosophic point of view its interest lies precisely in the universalization, or at least in the potentiality for being universalized. I think that the author exposes Kierkegaard's thought with clarity, and there is a useful chapter on the "inter-relationship of the stages." In particular the author does well to insist that Kierkegaard did not understand the stages as mutually exclusive, even though the transition from a lower to a higher stage is an existential and not a dialectical transition, accomplished by decision or choice and not by mere thinking. The religious stage, for instance, does not exclude the ethical but subsumes and elevates it.

In his religious teaching Kierkegaard undoubtedly drew attention to essential facts of religion in general and of Christianity in particular. For example, one is not a religious man because one speculates about religion or about the Absolute, but rather if one recognizes one's sinfulness before God and worships Him with faith; one has to commit oneself, to do something; speculative metaphysics are not the same thing as living faith. The author rightly stresses Kierkegaard's pre-occupation with the problem what it means to be a Christian or "how I am to become a Christian." But Kierkegaard also indulged in a great deal of exaggeration; and it seems that Mr. Thomte follows him in this. Thus it is true that "Christianity is an infringement or attack upon human nature," if by this is meant that Christianity rejects any superficial humanism which says that there is nothing wrong with man or that, if there is, man can set it right by himself; but it appears that something more is meant. "The purpose of the Christian revelation," says the author, "is not to develop and ennoble human nature"; it "brings an altogether new factor into human nature which is as inimical to human nature as the absolute is to the relative." I can only regard this as an exaggeration. Again, it is one thing to say that the mysteries of the Christian revelation transcend the human reason's power of comprehension; it is another thing to say that the Christian "believes against the understanding." Another example. "Here we meet," asserts the author, "a new educational principle: The teacher must be what he teaches. This is due to the fact that Christianity is not a doctrine but a communication of existence." Leaving aside the fact that the principle that one should practise what one preaches is not altogether new, I should have thought that Christianity is a doctrine, though it is certainly not only a doctrine and though the doctrine is given with a view to the leading of that Christian existence which can be led only through a communication or gift from God. In my opinion, Kierkegaard greatly overdid his attack on "objectivity"; and Karl Barth and his disciples follow him in this.

FREDERICK C. COPLESTON.

THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF HISTORY

The Christian Understanding of History. By F. C. Rust. (Lutterworth Press. 17s. 6d.)

HISTORIANS, philosophers and theologians are all to-day concerned with the problem of the meaning of history. But their respective disciplines remain for the most part strangers to one another: indeed the history of cultures, the philosophy of history and, lastly,

sacred history, are at present watertight compartments of learning. It is, then, refreshing to find Mr. F. C. Rust gathering together these three angles of vision into a single perspective and attempting a comprehensive interpretation of history centred, indeed, on Revelation, but integrating in its scope the findings of research in whatever field.

Not that there is here any question of a syncretism that would force incompatible notions into the same harness. In his opening chapters Mr. Rust begins by clearing away the interpretations which he considers inadequate. Such, in the first place, is the "biological" conception, which reduces history to a mere function of nature; here the author has the theories of Oswald Spengler particularly in view. He goes on to demolish the mythical theory of progress, notably in the form given it by Karl Marx. Then he rejects the intellectualist notions, from which Hegel's philosophy of history and Italian idealism are singled out for special criticism. Finally he expresses his dissatisfaction with the evolutionary theory of the history of religions and with the "liberal" interpretation of the origins of Christianity. I will not delay on this critical part of the work, though it abounds in remarks of great penetration. In the positive synthesis which he gives us Mr. Rust draws his inspiration from three main sources: first, dialectical theology as practised by Barth and still more by Brunner, whose influence on the book is marked; then, biblical theology, and here Mr. Rust draws upon two excellent models, Professors C. H. Dodd and T. W. Manson—though it is surprising to find Cullmann passed over in this connection; the final source of inspiration is the science of civilizations, and for this the author turns to the work of Prof. Toynbee.

It is clear that biblical history lies at the centre of Mr. Rust's perspective. It occupies the central chapters of his book. These pages, though their thought is not always original, provide a good, comprehensive view of the story of salvation as the two Testaments unfold it to us. The author insists, with good reason, on the fact that the religious significance of the history of Israel does not lie in the religious genius of the Jewish people, but exclusively in the great things that God accomplished through them. He emphasizes the capital importance of the Exodus from Egypt. He sets in clear relief the different crises through which the nation passed, as through so many acts of divine judgment in which the world of sinfulness was laid low and the new Israel brought to birth. Yet this new birth, this new creation, continued to hang in the balance till its final consummation in the coming of Christ. With Him the hour is come, the judgment of this world and the new creation are at hand—though still they are not openly manifested. They remain veiled and hidden, to be grasped only by that decisive act which is faith.

Did sacred history end with Christ? That is one of the fundamental

problems for the Christian view of history. For Bultmann, of course, and for the advocates of "realized eschatology," the meaning of our history lies solely in the present historical conditions in which man lives, and not at all in any expectation of events to come, or in the advent of the future Kingdom of God. In some remarkable pages Mr. Rust shows that one must combine the individualistic point of view (in Bultmann's sense)—according to which man merely passes through history in order thereby to gain entrance to an eternity that is already with us—with a collective view, in which humanity as a whole is seen to await and to stretch out towards the Second Coming (p. 203). There is, then, a sacred history actually unfolding. Faith and the sacraments, by which the action of God breaks into our world of time, constitute its events and milestones. This is the true, the real history, hidden beneath merely outward appearances. In the march of this history the New Israel is fashioned progressively till the Day of final Judgment, the day of God's crowning verdict, when the inner content of history shall be laid bare.

Such, one might say, is the backbone of history, built up of three essential sections—the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Church. But what, in that case, becomes of what is called history in common parlance—the history of cultures, of religions, of empires? Does it all lie simply outside the perspective of Christian history? And if so, would that perspective be a really comprehensive and inclusive one? One must recognize that this question is often left without an answer; and, as a result of failing to face up to such problems, Christians have frequently been unable to give clear formulation to the relation that obtains between Christianity and other religions, or between the Church and scientific or economic progress, and to incorporate these factors into a single, comprehensive, Christian outlook. It is the outstanding merit of Mr. Rust's work that round sacred history it groups history in its entirety and integrates it in a single Christian insight. And it is a further merit to have seen that what, from this standpoint, characterizes profane history is an ambiguity so radical that Christian thought has been able both to incorporate it as an item to be absorbed, and to stand over against it in unresolvable opposition.

I shall single out three examples of this ambiguity, in three matters of fundamental importance, where the position taken up by Mr. Rust seems to me wholly admirable. The first is that of the relation of Christianity to other religions. Here one encounters two extreme views: one, that of Barth, condemns outright all revelation given in the ordinary processes of nature; the other reduces Christianity to the level of one among many forms of religious evolution (p. 55). Mr. Rust, adopting an excellent formula of Brunner's—"No religion in

the world is without some elements of truth; no religion is without its profound error"—shows that every religion retains a part of the truth, a vestige of the "natural" revelation, and yet this revelation is always to some extent perverted. So it constitutes at once a stepping-stone and a barrier on the way to conversion. Too often, in Christian thought, only one of these aspects is grasped. It seems to me a matter for regret that Mr. Rust did not see fit to add that "natural" religion is bounded historically by the fact of the revelation to Abraham, in the same way as Judaism is bounded by the fact of the revelation in Christ.¹

The second example is the famous question of the *Preparatio Evangelica* set by Eusebius of Caesarea. How is one to envisage the relation of Christianity to the religions which preceded it? Here, too, opposing views are to be found—and that since the time of the Fathers of the Church themselves. Clement of Alexandria saw in Plato and in Greek philosophy a providential preparation for the Gospel; Origen hailed the *pax romana* as providing the conditions for its spread. Yet Tertullian condemned Graeco-Roman civilization lock, stock and barrel as the work of the devil. Again Mr. Rust shows that both aspects must be kept in sight. Greek thought made ready for the Gospel—but not as a development which might eventually have reached that goal, for Revelation is something totally novel, introducing a complete break; the category of progress is quite alien to biblical thought (p. 127). Greek thought brought man to a great awareness of his need for God. Yet by regarding intelligence as the means of salvation, and equating vice with ignorance, the wisdom of the Greeks set up the human intellect as an absolute and thus, as St. Paul said on the Areopagus, became a terrible obstacle to the Gospel.

This radical ambiguity, this two-faced character of "natural" religion, appears again in a third example, that of the present relation of sacred to profane history. Here again we find two unreconciled attitudes. Some confess to seeing in political society the domain of Satan, and in scientific progress the handiwork of evil spirits. Others tend to lapse into a facile optimism and look to the coming of a kingdom of God on earth which is to be the triumph of social Christianity (p. 273). Mr. Rust shows that a Christian can accept neither thesis. For him, political society, arising as it does from the basis of creation, cannot be at bottom evil; yet it is involved inextricably in the world of sin and, further, will continue to have a "diabolic" side to it till sin is destroyed once and for all in the final Judgment. Thus political society, when it sets itself up as an absolute cult—of a nation, or even of democracy or progress—must be the city

¹ I have discussed this point further in *Le mystère de l'Avent*, Paris, Le Seuil 1948.

of Satan standing over against the city of God. All the same, though unable to offer any prospect of freeing man from sin (p. 235), it can enter into the history of salvation and, absorbed therein, play a real part in it.

So the religious significance of the history of civilization unfolds before us. It does not show a single thread of progress, as simple evolutionary theories suppose; nor is it made up of a heterogeneous congeries of cultures, as Spengler thought; but—and here Mr. Rust takes up the more sensitive insights of Prof. Toynbee, to place them in a theological setting—it consists of a series of *kairoi*, decisive crises, which are not only the internal disruption and the verdict passed upon a culture that has sinned by excess of *hybris*, but also a renewal of the Church in and through this purification. These *kairoi* not only subsume and perpetuate that “crisis” *par excellence* which is the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, but they are also an anticipation and instalment of the final *kairos*, the Last Judgment. Here, then, one finds reconciled Bultmann’s view of judgment as a reality always at hand and the traditional view of a final Judgment: for the individual as such judgment is an ever-present reality, and at the same time the world of creatures as a whole has yet to learn that Judgment hangs over them, a *krisis* that both condemns and saves. Thus both the imminence and the postponement of the Judgment are alike true: the history of the world is the story of a perpetual judgment, of which the Second Coming of Christ will be but the last and supreme moment.

From these few considerations one can see the wide scope of this book. It does us the great service of gathering into a sort of *Summa* the hitherto scattered researches bearing on the Christian understanding of history, and in that respect is an important landmark in religious thought. Here we see broached for the first time what may become a complete theology set in an historical perspective. With certain points of detail one may well disagree. I would not, for instance, accept without qualification what the author says of the Hellenistic cast of St. John’s theology (p. 180), or of the doctrine of the Eucharist (p. 270), and least of all of “Anti-Christ . . . manifested in the demonic pretensions of the Papacy” (p. 268). But happily this last passage is in striking contrast to the general balance and soundness of doctrine of the rest of the book. A blemish of this kind cannot check our gratitude to the author for so remarkable a contribution to theological thought.

JEAN DANIELOU.

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